

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 1

WASHINGTON, May 25 (UPI) – At some point this fall, probably in September, China will take delivery of a state-of-the-art anti-aircraft and anti-missile defense system. For an overall contract that with training and spares will certainly exceed a billion dollars, the Russian-built S-300 PMU-2 air defense system will provide China with the power to challenge the United States for command of the airspace over the Taiwan straits.

The Russian air defense system, reckoned by military specialists to be more advanced than the US Patriot missile system, has an intercept range of up to 120 miles, and according to the Pentagon's latest report on China's military capabilities it provides "increased lethality against tactical ballistic missiles and more effective electronic counter measures."

China's military modernization program also includes Russian-built Sovremenny-2 guided missile destroyers, another eight Russian Kilo-class submarines, and an accelerated production program for China's own Song class of submarines. They carry a new generation of underwater-launched cruise missiles and anti-ship missiles, which represent a serious challenge to the US Navy's traditional command of the waters around the Taiwan Straits and the Yellow Sea.

China is also building its own advanced warships. Last year China launched its own new Luzhou class guided missile destroyer, which incorporates much of what China's naval designers learned from the Sovremenny ships, but it said to have improved electronics that double the effective radar detection range.

China claims to be doing all this with a defense budget of a mere \$23 billion, or about five percent of US military spending. Nobody really believes this, but equally there was skepticism of Pentagon estimates that the real level of Chinese spending was around \$90 billion a year. But now London's prestigious International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) has published its own detailed estimate, which comes very close to the US estimates.

The IISS study analyzed China's defense budget for the year 2003, and by including figures for China's arms purchases from abroad (including Israel and Brazil as well as Russia), research and development costs and industrial subsidies, it came up with a more realistic figure of \$39.6 billion. The IISS then applied the World Bank's purchasing power parity figures, which allow for the fact that China's real costs are far lower, and reckoned that in US terms, China was really spending the equivalent of \$75.5 billion.

Bear in mind that in the years since 2003, China's official defense budget has increased by over 10 percent a year (as it has for the past 15 years in a row) so the IISS figures would suggest that the Pentagon's estimate of around \$90 billion for this year is bang on target. This would make China the world's number two in defense spending, ahead of Russia, Japan, Britain or France.

"Expenditure is on a sharp upward trend and will remain so in view of popular and elite support for accelerated defense modernization," said IISS director John Chipman at this week's publication of "The Military Balance," the annual IISS survey of global military power.

"As China's strategic presence continues to expand, the question of what resources Beijing is investing in defense capabilities, and to what end, loom larger," Chipman added. "The military dynamic of the US-China relationship remains implicitly but decidedly competitive, and there is little that augurs for change. With that, the risk will grow that this military dynamic will over time have a greater bearing on the tone and content of the relationship as a whole."

China's official military journal recently published an interesting editorial that argued for the development of a Chinese military "commensurate with its international status... and its interests." This is significant for the long-term given that China has major energy investments in Sudan, Angola, Nigeria, Central Asia and Latin America, and its prosperity as a great trading economy and as the world's second biggest oil importer depends on sea routes.

But in the short term, any military analyst looking at China's current force structure and at the 700-plus ballistic missiles facing Taiwan would probably concur with this week's Pentagon report that "In the near term, China's military build-up appears focused on preparing for Taiwan Strait contingencies, including the possibility of US intervention."

"Beijing's sustained military buildup in the area of the Taiwan Strait risks disrupting the status quo," the Pentagon report added, which may be an understatement. The Pentagon report does not add that the status quo has been shifting because of Taiwan's own politics, where the National Assembly has declined to vote the \$19 billion in funding for the arms modernization package that President George Bush offered them back in his first term. If Taiwan's politicians are reluctant to vote the money to help defend themselves, American taxpayers are entitled to ask why they should do it for them.

There is no doubt that the Pentagon and the Bush administration are aware of all this and deeply concerned by it. As Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has noted, China's neighbors as well as the Americans are asking what China is intending to do with the surge in its military capabilities.

Dan Blumenthal, formerly senior country director for China and Taiwan in Rumsfeld's office and now with the American Enterprise Institute is warning that "the time may be fast approaching" when the United States has to recognize that its strategy of trying to encourage China to be a responsible player in the global security system is simply not working. Interestingly, Blumenthal's colleague at AEI Karl Zinsmeister has just been named as the new policy director at the White House. But with Iraq and Iran and North Korea already crowding out the agenda, the question is how much attention will the Bush administration can devote to China's military challenge and to the related question of Taiwan's curious reluctance to help meet it.

One of the reasons the price of gas was so high in California was Chinese consumption. There were probably more cars in California than any other state in the nation. If you wanted to know the average price of gas in California, take the national average and add 40¢. Our car only held about 11 gallons and it usually ran about \$30-\$35 to fill the tank. It irked me because there was plenty of fuel off the coast but the environmentalists blocked every attempt to recover it.

Congress was battling over the North Shore oil too. Every time the House voted to allow development the Senate blocked the legislation.

JUNEAU, Alaska, May 25 (UPI) – Alaska's governor says he has a deal with the state's top three North Slope energy companies for a proposed natural gas pipeline to the Lower 48.

Gov. Frank H. Murkowski said Wednesday his revised accord will ensure state oil revenues for 30 years under a proposed contract to recover North Slope natural gas, the Fairbanks (Alaska) Daily News-Miner reported Thursday.

Under the accord, Exxon Mobil Alaska Production Inc., BP Exploration (Alaska Inc.) and ConocoPhillips Alaska would pay a 20 percent tax on their Alaska oil profits, and they also could subtract investment credits of 20 percent.

The deal, which requires state legislative approval, effectively freezes oil and gas taxes for up to 45 years.

If lawmakers, who could take up the proposal as soon as next week, approve the initiative, it would result in shipment of about 4 billion cubic feet per day of natural gas to the Lower 48.

The environmentalists would probably block that too, it might thaw 2 in<sup>2</sup> of tundra. On the same day, I discovered that China didn't have the same problem with environmentalists we had in the US.

BEIJING, May 25 (UPI) – China Thursday saw its first petroleum directly piped into the country, Xinhua news agency reported; the oil was from Kazakhstan.

The crude oil was pumped through a newly constructed pipeline that travels from Kazakhstan, across Alatau Pass, and into northwest China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region.

The oil, which emerged at a petroleum hub in Alatau Pass at 3.10 a.m. (local time) Thursday, had taken 30 hours to travel the 575-mile pipeline. Workers at the Sino-Kazakh Oil Pipeline Co. Ltd. opened the valve on the China-Kazakh border at 7.32 p.m. (local time) Tuesday, following instructions from their Kazakh colleagues in Atasu, who began pumping oil into the pipeline at 8.22 p.m. Tuesday.

The pipeline will benefit both countries; China's rapidly growing economy is thirsty for energy, and the Kazakh deliveries are much-needed. China's endless thirst for oil – it is the world's second-largest importer – in turn helps the Kazakh economy.

The pipeline has the added advantage of being direct-delivery, reducing China's reliance on sea-transported oil through the Strait of Malacca; previously the route of 80 percent of its oil imports.

"(The pipeline) has provided a direct link between Kazakhstan's rich oil resources and China's robust oil consumer market," said Yin Juntai, China Petroleum Exploration and Development Company deputy general manager.

In 2005, China imported 127 million tons of crude oil. Kazakh crude, via Alataw Pass, made up 1.3 million tons of those imports. Following the opening of the pipeline, Kazakh imports are expected to reach 4.75 million tons in 2006, and 8 million tons in 2007.

The 575-mile pipeline runs from Atasu, Kazakhstan, to the Alataw Pass of Xinjiang, northwest China, and is built to transport 20 million tons of oil per year. Completed in November 2005, it cost \$700 million to build.

The 800-mile-long Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) is one of the largest pipeline systems in the world. It stretches from Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's North Slope, through rugged and beautiful terrain, to Valdez, the northernmost ice-free port in North America. Since pipeline startup in 1977, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, the operator of TAPS, has successfully transported over 15 billion barrels of oil. The cost to construct that pipeline was \$8 billion and it wasn't even twice as long as the new Chinese pipeline.

The one thing environmentalists didn't need was ammunition. The old saw said, "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link." In the case of TAPS, that link was named the Exxon Valdez. On March 24, 1989, shortly after midnight, the oil tanker Exxon Valdez struck Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound, Alaska, spilling more than 11 million gallons of crude oil. The spill was the largest in US history and tested the abilities of local, national, and industrial organizations to prepare for, and respond to, a disaster of such magnitude. Many factors complicated the cleanup efforts following the spill. The size of the spill and its remote location, accessible only by helicopter and boat, made government and industry efforts difficult and tested existing plans for dealing with such an event. The suit against Exxon has never been settled, although they set aside \$5 billion to cover the punitive damages originally awarded. The interest now exceeds the principal. In January of 2006, the 9th Circuit heard Exxon's appeal.

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If they had built the pipeline all the way to the lower 48 in the first place... All I got out of that was a handful of spit.

Getting back to what started this, it wasn't only the US that had a problem with China, it was the whole darned world. The Chinese continued a military buildup without apparent reason, was Taiwan worth that much? The reason for the buildup, many claimed, was that China intended to seize Taiwan. They need a big navy to do that because in 2005 Japan and the US agreed to protect Taiwan.

BEIJING, February 20 (2005) – The Chinese government is rebuffing a joint statement issued by the United States and Japan, which has broken new diplomatic ground by declaring that Taiwan is a shared strategic security concern for the two nations.

Beijing's opposing statement read, "Chinese Government and people resolutely oppose the United States and Japan in issuing any bilateral document concerning China's Taiwan, which meddles in the internal affairs of China, and hurts China's sovereignty."

29 Dec 2005 – Russia has delivered a number of newly completed warships to the PLA Navy this year, including seven Project 636 (Kilo class) diesel-electric submarines and one Project 956EM (Sovremenny class) missile destroyer.

Russian Regnum news agency confirmed that the North Shipyard based in St Petersburg delivered a Sovremenny class destroyer to the Chinese navy on Wednesday (28 December), only days after a Kilo class submarine was officially handed to China on 22 December. This year the PLA navy has already received seven of the eight Kilo class submarines and one of the two Sovremenny class destroyers it ordered from Russia in 2002.

22 Dec 2005 – The YingJi-62 (YJ-62) is a long-range subsonic anti-ship cruise missile (ASCM) developed by China Haiying Electro-Mechanical Technology Academy (CHETA, also known as 3rd Aerospace Academy). The missile was first spotted onboard the Type 052C (Lanzhou class) destroyers commissioned in 2004. The 280km-range missile may also form the basis for a longer-range land attack cruise missile (LACM) family for the PLA.

7 May 2006 – China sent its first space-based SAR system JianBing-5 into orbit on 27 April 2006 for all-weather targeting applications, particularly the location of naval forces in the Taiwan Strait. The space-based SAR system could see through clouds, rain, fog and dust in order to detect targets on the ground or underground, and in or under the ocean.

Understand one thing; the entire Chinese Navy is about the size of 2 Carrier Strike Groups, without the carriers. The Project 636 submarine is a Kilo, diesel electric with a snorkel and can stay underwater under ideal conditions for 4 days (96 hours). They have one ballistic missile sub with 12 missiles, no doubt with nuclear warheads. With only one single Type 092 SSBN, it is not possible for the PLA to establish an effective underwater nuclear strike capability, which can guarantee that at least one boat is ready to launch at any time. It has never put to sea. However, the boat served as a stepping

stone in the development of a more comprehensive Chinese nuclear-powered, submarine launched ballistic missile (SSBN) force in the future.

The Type 094 is the second-generation Chinese nuclear ballistic missile submarine (SSBN). The first-of-class has reportedly been under construction at Huludao Shipyard in Huludao, Liaoning Province since 1999 and was launched in July 2004. The submarine is armed with 16 JL-2 submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM) with a maximum range of 8,000km.

Most folks know what we have 24 of the 688, 23 of the 688I Los Angeles class attack subs, 3 of the Seawolf class attack subs and one of the Virginia class (commissioned) with second due to be condition before 01 Jul. There are 14 of the Ohio class SSBN and 2 of the SSGNs with a third due to be commissioned in Oct 06. We have 12 Carriers and 23 Ticonderoga class CGs, 51 Arleigh Burke class DDGs and 30 of the Oliver Hazard Perry class FFGs. We have way more than they do, of everything, but we're already fighting a war in Afghanistan and a second in Iraq.

I'm sure they're lying, but they claim to have ~400 nuclear weapons. I'd doubt that just to be on the safe side. We have something on the order of 5,600 nuclear weapons in active service, but I'd bet we're lying about that. We just took the Peacekeeper missile system offline and those 50 missiles carried 10 warheads each. We have 500 Minuteman III that aren't supposed to be MIRVd, but probably are with 3 warheads each. Our D-5 Tridents have a mixture of warheads totaling 2,688. Our military is small, less than 3 million troops counting the active, reserves and National Guard. Every one of them is a volunteer; we haven't had the draft in 30 years.

Our solution to being under manned is to use technology. Most of our bombs are educated and the latest generation of smart weapons a very small probability of error. We have all kinds of fighters, bombers, tankers and cargo aircraft, too many to list. Ironically, for a peace loving nation, we have the most powerful military in the world.

The small arms of both countries are online.

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In terms of a possible conflict, a war between the US and China was always there, hanging over our heads. We were involved in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but it seemed possible we'd be out of Iraq by the end of 2007 and we might leave Afghanistan too. As the War on Terror became increasingly unpopular, the only thing that could re-fuel it would be another terrorist attack. It was becoming more like the Vietnam conflict daily. Make that the end of 2011 for Iraq and who knows when for Afghanistan. We can't win any more than the Russians could.

Our real problem was energy, the demand continued to rise despite the increasing prices. The only other potential problem was the bird flu, H5N1. But it hadn't mutated and WHO was now suggesting that it might not. If we could require all gasoline fueled vehi-

cle to be flexible fuel vehicles burning E85, we could produce enough gasoline domestically and not import crude petroleum. In similar fashion, we could run B100 in all of our diesel vehicles. Solar and wind sourced electrical energy could, in time, meet most if not all of our needs and we could burn 'clean' coal until it did. Wind and sunshine were free and the only costs associated with it were distribution costs and recovery of the investment in assets needed to produce it.

This wasn't the same country it had been when we adopted the Constitution. Some of the changes were good, while others were equally bad. While we didn't necessarily treat all people equal, they were. Morality, on the other hand continued to decay. We were poisoning ourselves with drugs, including alcohol. We were as well educated as we were 50 years before. These were symptoms of decline and decay. In some ways we were becoming a divided people. Quite frankly, I expected it to get worse.

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"I get so tired of trying to stretch the money, what are we going to do?"

"Are you asking for my opinion or commiseration?"

"I don't know what I'm asking. I'm more frustrated than anything; I paid \$3.749 for gas today at Costco."

"The best bet would to move the kid and grandkids out, paint and carpet and sell this sucker. We would have enough left over to buy a trailer and settle down in Arizona."

"Do you really want to move?"

"Yes, yes I do. Forty years ago, this was a good place to live, but not anymore. I'm sorry I ever moved us here. Most of our furniture is junk except for the oak furniture. We could keep it and give the rest to Goodwill or send it to the Dump. I think if I could get out of here it might even improve my health. You know that Cymbala ad on TV that says depression hurts? It really does, you know, don't you feel it?"

"Is that what it is?"

"I'd bet my life on it."

"Where in Arizona?"

"I'd love to move to Sedona, but I think all we can afford is a place like Holbrook. If we were debt free, we could live very well on our income and I could buy back my guns. All you want is a place where they have a quilting guild and someplace you can buy material and supplies. You can pick the place, I don't drive anyway. All I need is a good gun store."

"I'll think about it."

"Don't take too long, the housing market is softening."

It was an itch smack dab in the middle of my back. The only way things were going to change was if we made the first move and you could take that literally. Our daughter had something burning deep inside of her and I think I understood. Her goal was to get a Master's degree and then become a lawyer. In that way she'd one-up me. To do that she had us raising her kids and grandchildren were nice for a visit, but not as live-ins. Sharon didn't take too long to decide.

"Ok, I have my misgivings, but let's do it."

Derek had written from Iraq that if we ever decided to leave ERK (Environmentalists' Republik of Kalifornia) he'd be happy to help us move. I called him and took him up on it; he was on leave from Iraq.

"Hey kid, get a plane ticket and you can drive the rental truck."

"Did you decide where to move to?"

"I think she has, but she hasn't said. Use your military ID and fly standby, that's about all I can afford for a ticket."

"I still have to go back and finish my time in the sandbox."

"No hurry, kid. It will take a couple of months just to haul the junk out. Besides, I want to get Chris to engineer a rifle rest on my wheelchair."

"Do you really need the wheelchair?"

"I didn't when I got it, but I do now."

"Are you on oxygen too?"

"Only when I catch cold."

"So what do you have emphysema or chronic bronchitis?"

"One or both don't know. And, to tell you the truth, I don't want to find out."

"Why not?"

"They find out when they do the autopsy."

"Are you going to rent a lot or buy acreage?"



"Sharon hasn't told me. I prefer to buy about 2½ acres, if we could afford it, but we probably can't. It sort of depends on how much the house brings."

"What does your house need?"

"A coat of paint inside, new floor covering and a ton of soap. Then, when you can find the house, it needs a few repairs."

"Why don't you get Damon to move out there and help you do the work?"

"No thank you. I might get him to move in with us when we get to wherever we're going. He can walk the dogs for me."

"You knew Mary bought a .30-30?"

"She wrote me."

"I'm getting a FAL."

"Get a M1A."

"They cost more."

"I'll make up the difference; it's only about \$300."

"No sir, I'm buying one of those Belgian Steyr FALs from DSA."

"Planning on converting it to full auto?"

"I don't know that they can be; but, if so, possibly."

"I thought you were against full auto."

"My being in Iraq changed that."

"How about Mary and you move to Arizona?"

"I'll talk to her about it, but her folks are here."

"It was just a thought. Damon probably won't move either; he wants to be close to his kids. When will you get back?"

"Around October."

"Keep your powder dry, I have some knives for you to sharpen."

"Love you Dad."

"Love you too."

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"Have you decided where we're moving?"

"Winslow."

"Ok, that's closer to Flagstaff."

"What's in Flagstaff?"

"Authorized retailers of Springfield Armory rifles."

"I located a sporting goods store for you, Desert Ridge Firearms & Sporting Goods."

"What do they sell?"

"AR-15's, Remington's."

"We'll have to go to Flagstaff then."

"Why?"

"To buy real guns."

"You're going to buy a M1A rifle even if it kills you."

"Yes ma'am, one each genuine in the box Springfield Armory M1A Super Match rifle and about a dozen of the 20 round box magazines."

"Uh-huh, what else?"

"One each genuine in the box Springfield Armory XD .45ACP pistol with 4 extra high capacity magazines."

"And what else?"

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 2

*Well, I'm a runnin' down the road, tryin' to loosen my load,  
I've got seven women on my mind:  
four that wanna own me, two that wanna stone me,  
one says she's a friend of mine.  
Take it easy, take it easy,  
don't let the sound of your own wheels drive you crazy.  
Lighten up while you still can, don't even try to understand,  
just find a place to make your stand and take it easy.*

*Well, I'm a standin' on a corner in Winslow, Arizona  
and such a fine sight to see:  
it's a girl, my Lord, in a flatbed Ford  
slowin' down to take a look at me.  
Come on, baby, don't say maybe.  
I gotta know if your sweet love is gonna save me.  
We may lose and we may win though we will never be here again.  
So open up, I'm climbin' in, so take it easy.*

*Well, I'm a runnin' down the road, tryin' to loosen my load,  
got a world of trouble on my mind.  
Lookin' for a lover who won't blow my cover,  
she's so hard to find.  
Take it easy, take it easy,  
don't let the sound of your own wheels drive you crazy.  
Come on, baby, don't say maybe.  
I gotta know if your sweet love is gonna save me.  
Oh, we got it easy,  
we oughta take it easy.*

(Eagles – Take it Easy) The building on the corner was a memorial until it burned down.

"One each Winchester model 94 Legacy in the .45 Colt."

"You're on a roll, what else?"

"Two Ruger Vaqueros, one with a 4<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" barrel and one with a 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" barrel. Plus a Laredo-an crossdraw rig."

"What, no shotgun?"

"Mossberg 590A1 with a 20" barrel and a magazine extension in 12-gauge."

"Let me guess, Winchester model 9422 in .22LR."

"Yep. I'll be done then."

"You'll be dead then."

"What's it going to take for me to be able to buy them?"

"One each new in the box Husqvarna Mega Quilter plus one each new in the box Inspira quilting frame."

"Don't you want some guns too?"

"Yeah right, like you can shoot all of those at one time. You want guns and I want to quilt. It's entirely up to you how we work it out."

"Ask more for the house, we're going to need about 15 grand to buy all that stuff."

"One thing more."

"Ok, what else?"

"I get the master bedroom as my quilting room."

"Agreed, I'm used to sleeping in a tiny room."

"You're renting the medical equipment from that company in Van Nuys, what are you going to do about that?"

"Turn it in and buy our own. I always wanted a 10-liter oxygen machine anyway and for what they charge, we could buy one. I don't use the CPAP anyway and you own yours, which you don't use either. A nebulizer is not that expensive, under \$100. Everything else we have we already own."

"Why do you want a 10-liter machine?"

"For when I have the heart attack. All we need is a 10-liter machine and a zapper."

"Zapper?"

"Defibrillator."

"So, tell me, what's everything you want cost?"

"I already did, 15 grand including your sewing machine. Rifle \$2,900, pistol \$600, revolvers \$1,100, Winchesters, \$1,000, holsters \$400, oxygen machine \$2,500, zapper \$1,800 and Nebulizer \$100 = \$10,400. That leaves you \$4,600 for your stuff."

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The downside to our moving was that we'd have to replace some furniture and I hadn't allowed \$50 grand for my bomb shelter. I read the newspapers daily and one of these days, before too long, the stuff was going to hit the fan. Understand, I'd written a story about every kind of disaster we were likely to experience, except a hurricane or a tornado. But I believed in 3 people George Santayana, Gunny Highway and Travis Dane. I know that Travis Dane and Gunny Highway were a fictional characters in movies, but that didn't mean that 'chance favors the prepared mind' and 'improvise, adapt, overcome' weren't good slogans. Santayana was a real man who said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

I'm happy to say that our neighbors put their house on the market for \$400,000. The ones with the dogs who gave us all of the trouble. Smarty pants put our house on the market for \$325,000 as a 'fixer upper'. I'll be damned if she didn't get her asking price. She got the carpets shampooed and scrubbed the kitchen floor. Anyway, I figured if she got \$200,000 as a 'fixer upper' she'd be doing good; very good.

The realtor got 10% and I'd say she earned every penny of it. My wife was laughing so hard at me I thought she was going to wet her pants. Hey, for \$292,500 clear, let her laugh and wet her pants. We walked away with \$202,000 clear after paying off the mortgage. Sharon hired one of those 5-yard dumpsters and Lorrie's kids to empty most of the house right into the dumpster. She kept the oak furniture and her new chair. Everything else went into the dumpster and the boys only charged \$350 to load the thing, which cost \$350 for 5 yards. She was burning through the money; we were down to \$201,000. Then, she rented a 24' U-Haul truck for a one-way move. It was only August and Derek was still in Iraq, but our furniture was on the truck and we were at the Day's Inn.

Sharon rented a storage room for one year and had Amy's furniture moved back, plus rented her an apartment for 6 months and pre-paid it. Amy was seething and Sharon never looked happier. As Sharon muscled the truck out of town towing her Daewoo, she muttered, "Good Night and Good Luck."

Sharon found a 24 acre lot for \$20,000. Here are the details:

Land Property; Winslow; Coconino County; hill/mountain view; approximate lot is 2640 x 970 x 2810; lot is 1045440 ft<sup>2</sup>; approximately 24 acre(s); and, borders undeveloped land, level lot, meadow/trees, scrub vegetation, San Francisco Peaks view. The place needed a well and there was no phone or utility service unless you wanted to pay to run the lines. We rented storage, had the truck unloaded and turned it in. Then, we got a room at Motel 6. The property was west of town towards the Meteor Crater except north a bit.

There was a Fleetwood dealer in Show Low. We bought a Beacon Hill Series (Floor plan C) with 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, 1,490 ft<sup>2</sup> with the sunroom to use for her sewing

room. We added the 4' stretch which added 4' to the den and 2' to bedrooms no. 3 and no. 3. Perfect and we still had a ton of money left over after drilling the well and buying the home and furniture. The wind doesn't blow so much around here, but we could put in the 40kw wind turbine that put out 12v, a lot of amps, and I could back it up with battery backups and a 10kw inverter. Instead of 40kw monster wind turbine, the Air-X produces 400 watts each for \$500 per unit, can be run in parallel and doesn't require a controller since they're internally regulated. Also, they don't need towers; they can mount on 30-foot guyed poles or on top of your roof using a roof mount. They start making power at 3 knots, and make peak power at 28 knots.

What a choice to make, 1 turbine or 100. In the end, the money might be the same, I really didn't know. The big turbines were very expensive and if 1 turbine went down, the entire system was down. 40,000 watts divided by 400 watts did equal 100. That was one hell of a lot of maintenance. On the other hand, if one turbine went down I'd only lose 400 watts, not all 40,000 watts. I checked and a 30' guyed pole would run about \$75. Total cost was  $\$575 \times 100 = \$57,500$ . I had only allowed \$30 grand for the power system. That was about 50% down. If TEOCAWKI came, I wouldn't have any payments. What the hell there was safety in numbers, I bought 4 10kw wind turbines.

The only phone we had was the cell phone, but that suited me just fine, I'd find another way to get on the internet or maybe not bother. The well went \$15,000 and the home about \$50,000 installed, I'm embarrassed what we paid. We still had enough money to buy the things we both wanted AND a shelter.  $\$199,000$  minus  $(\$20,000 + \$15,000 + 50,000 + 30,000) = \$84,000$  less living expenses, or about \$80,000. Utah Shelter Systems wanted \$45,300 plus delivery and installation for a 10 x 50 shelter. We added \$700 for 2 extra set of double bunks and another \$760 for the kitchen sink/counter. We also upgraded the LUWA system to 45psi for \$550. I could get around well enough we didn't need a wheelchair ramp. There was also the septic system that went in before the home and because Sharon Packer said the thump from a bomb might break it, I had it buried very, very deep. Goodbye chemical toilet, hello real toilet.

By the time we had everything bought including land, well, turbines, septic, furniture, guns and all, we were broke except for the income I'd earned on the Trust and my disability, 3 months' worth. That amounted roughly \$9,000 plus her pension, another \$1,000. I sure wanted internet though. I had everything I wanted in life, now and a little money in the bank.

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"Hello?"

"Hiya kid."

"Where in the name of God have you been?"

"We moved."

"Where?"

*"Well, I'm a standin' on a corner in Winslow, Arizona."*

"Huh?"

"It's an Eagles song."

"I know the song, where are you?"

"Where the song says, come and visit."

"Winslow, Arizona?"

"Yeah. Did you buy the FAL rifle?"

"Yep. Did you buy the M1A?"

"I bought the Super Match, 'cause I liked the stock. Chris built me a rifle rest on the front of my chair and a gun rack on back. I got the Nightforce NXS 8-32x56mm scope for the rifle. I still need night vision and the Surefire suppressor"

"Where are you really?"

"I'm sitting in our new Fleetwood Beacon Hills home on our 24 acre plot northwest of Winslow. I got the bomb shelter and even ordered the package plus an extra CD V-717 and CD V-700, extra dosimeters and KI. We put in a wind turbines for electricity backed up by a used Kohler 50kw generator and a 3,000-gallon propane tank. There are 3 bedrooms and we're only using one so come and visit."

"What do you have for ammo?"

"Black Hills, 175gr BTHP match and 180gr Nosler AccuBond hunting for my rifle. Speer Gold Dot for the handguns and Winchester. 15 pellet 00 buck and Brenneke 3" Black Magic slugs for the Mossberg and lots off .22LR for the 9422. When you get to Winslow, you can call Sharon's cell phone and I'll come lead you out to the place."

"Where in Winslow?"

"On the corner. Just tell a local, you're looking for the corner, it's famous. If you go to Wiki and look up Winslow, Arizona, they have a picture of the corner before the building burned down. They're working on rebuilding."

"Ok, why Winslow?"

"The economy is depressed and the land was cheap. I'll give you a lot if you want to put in a house."

"Where would I work?"

"You were an MP, right?"

"Can't answer that."

"49th MP Battalion, 1-113 Cavalry, C Troop, 1st Platoon, Derek, it's in your address for Iraq. Anyway, the prison is looking for guards. It pays about \$25,000 to start and they have school buses here Mary can drive."

"I did promise to come and visit, so we'll be there. What's the number?"

"928-555-1212." (Sorry...)

"Do you have an email address?"

"I'm working on that, but not yet."

"We'll be there for Thanksgiving."

o

I hadn't seen Derek for the better part of 10 years, except in pictures. I wasn't prepared for what I did see when he got here, either. I'd seen that look once before, in the late '60s or early '70s when Dennis got home from Vietnam. My cousin Dennis was a medic in a MASH unit in Vietnam. He'd worked with an Ophthalmologic Surgeon. He described one wounded man to me and that was more than enough. I think they call it the 1,000-yard stare.

As one guy who had been to Iraq described it, "I have never seen anything like this. Trucks and Humvees that looked like they had just come through a shredder. Their equipment was full of shrapnel blast holes and missing entire major pieces that you could tell had been blasted by IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices). These kids looked bad, too! I mean, sunken eyes, thin as rails, and that 1,000-yard stare they talk about after direct combat. Made me pretty damned embarrassed to be a 'rear-area warrior.' All people could do was stop in their tracks and stare ... and feel like me ... like I wanted to bow my head in reverence. A Marine captain stationed with me was standing next to me, also headed to the gym. He said: 'Part of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 8th Marines, sir. Took the heaviest losses of any unit up north as part of Task Force Danger, sir.'"

He called me from Winslow and sang me the lyrics. I told him I'd be there in 10 and to just hang on. I half expected he wouldn't look good, but still...



"Lost some weight, huh?"

"It was hot over there. What's the deal, did I get taller?"

"I sort of shriveled up a little, bad posture, I suppose. Are you going to formally introduce me?"

"Dad, this is Mary, Elizabeth and Joshua."

"You didn't bring DJ?"

"Junior wouldn't let him come; and, he didn't want to come so I didn't force him."

"I can't say I'm surprised after he returned the Christmas present last year."

"I'm sorry about that."

"Don't be. It was his choice and I told Mary to use the card for Elizabeth and Joshua. Follow me and we'll be there in a few minutes."

I needed a minute to compose myself. He was 31 when he left, but looked close to 40. He had the same worry lines in his forehead that Dennis had when he came home from 'Nam. I was sure that once I accepted his looks, I'd just see him as an older 32. I didn't want him to see how I felt and had kept a 'stiff upper lip' in Winslow. Of course I wasn't any prize either. Half my hair was grey and it was falling out as my hairline receded a bit. That was the Boggess genes. Derek rather favored his mother in his looks although he was 5'11 to her 4'11.

In some ways, neither of our two sons had gotten over her death, although Derek was more accepting, probably because his faith was stronger. He was the exact opposite of Damon, level headed, took life as it came and just kept plodding. He hadn't inherited my major depression disorder where Damon had. Damon went me one better and was bipolar. He'd be ok if he'd just get his medication right. He had a very strange sense of humor, but so did Derek. I loved them equally but Damon was too much like me, just as I was too like my father.

o

"Still writing fiction?"

"Yeah, but I haven't posted it in quite a while. Any progress on getting your story published?"

"Not yet, but I haven't given up."

"Don't. Just keep submitting it to publishers and eventually one of them will see what a good story *Soul Forge* is. People like Damon's writing because he's a cut up. Your stuff is much harder to write since it's fantasy. I might be able to help a little in the future, I only have one more thing I want to buy and I have the money to do it. It's just a matter of ordering it."

What is it?"

"A rifle. When I've out lived this body of mine, all of my guns will become yours, Damon only wants the shotgun and he bought one."

"Are you going to make me guess?"

"I want a McMillan Tac-50. Then, I want to equip it with the Jet suppressor and night vision. I also want to fit my M1A with a suppressor. The money is available because we've been spending far less on things than I would like. We only have about a 3 month supply of food, but I have managed to store heirloom seeds. Our only utility bills are the cell phone and propane. We generate our own electricity and almost never drive to town. We make a once a month trip for groceries and to refill our prescriptions, but I have Humana Part D insurance for them. Of course, you know me; we do have a lot of beans and rice. I've made a point to spend as much on food as we did when Amy was living with us. But we don't eat  $\frac{1}{4}$  as much food so it should accumulate."

"You quit going to the doctor?"

"Yep, he never did a thing for me except write prescriptions quarterly and I got him to write me a full year when we left California. When they run out, I try calling him first and see if he will order refills. Otherwise I'll see a doctor in Winslow, tell him what I take and try to get new prescriptions for the same things. I keep my eye on my blood pressure and sugar level and that's about all I really need, beside Zoloft and Plavix."

"From what I see in the papers since I get home, that one letter you wrote me really summed things up well."

"The one where I said, 'The way I read the paper, we're going to war with Mexico, Venezuela and Iran. Chavez says he's going to give the 21 F-16s he has to Iran so they can fight us. Mexico's significant somebody says that our closing our border is akin to an act of war.'

"Come home intact and alive and buy a M1A and plenty of ammo. We're sending National Guard troops to guard the border, but because of Posse Comitatus, they can't use their weapons. It's going to give a whole new meaning to accidental discharge. The Mexican Army is switching from G-3s to G-36s, they're manufacturing under license. It's a shame you don't have one of those, but the US Army won't buy them because they work in all conditions."

"George can't run again, but he put in a plug for his brother Jeb. Given the sentiment at home, he has 2 chances, slim and none. The Hispanics are buying up the houses in our tract and putting 3-4 families in each. And, that's the good news. The world is going to hell in a handcart with balloon tires and well-greased axles."

"The only thing I did differently was to buy the FAL."

"Close enough, do you have a handgun?"

"No."

"Take my SA XD .45 and I'll buy another."

"How did you convince Sharon to let you buy the guns?"

"I bought her a long neck quilting machine and the table that goes with it. You need to check out the den at the end of the hall, it's wall-to-wall with quilting equipment."

"Assuming you get everything you want bought, then what?"

o

"Once I have enough ammo stocked, I get a the 1 year supply of food from Walton Feed, a unit at a time until I have 1 year for 10 people."

"Why so much?"

"If I can't talk you into moving here, I will have a place you can come to when TSHTF."

"How come the XD .45 instead of the Kimber?"

"Good question, but I don't really have the answer. The Kimber is expensive and has close tolerances. I suppose that I didn't want anything LAPD had. Plus the grip isn't any bigger, but holds more cartridges."

Springfield Armory's XD line of pistols received a great honor on May 19th, when it was awarded the coveted American Rifleman Golden Bullseye Award for "Handgun of the Year" at the NRA annual meeting in Milwaukee, WI.

The Award was for the latest version of the XD pistol chambered in .45 ACP. It packs 13+1 rounds of big-bore firepower into a trim, ergonomic frame, featuring the same Point & Shoot Ergonomics™ that have made the XD line famous with shooting enthusiasts.

Mark Keefe, Editor in Chief, American Rifleman Magazine said the XD .45 ACP's superior ergonomics make it the best of the next generation of .45s. "The XD is the first of

the high-capacity polymer-framed .45 caliber pistols that does not feel like a .45 in the hand," Keefe said.

You may have noticed that I didn't bring up Iraq. He told me a long time ago he probably wouldn't be allowed to talk about it. From that stare, I knew better than to ask. I could only hope he didn't have PTSD. Nobody knew I'd bought a Taurus PT1911 and I had no intentions of telling anyone. Neither did they know that we made an occasional trip to the Res to buy smokes. Illegal as hell, but I didn't care. I did it to cut costs; I was smoking like a chimney.

"How far was it from Flippin to Winslow?"

"1,125 miles. We picked up I-44 in Tulsa and took it to I-40. It was roughly 17 hours driving time."

"It would probably take your brother 24 hours to get here, assuming he'd come."

"He bought a shotgun."

"How did he manage that, Kathy and he spit up?"

"He gave Carrie the money and she bought it for him as a Christmas present."

o

One of the shelter options pertained to how they installed the main entrance. All shelters come standard with ladders for each of the two entrances. During installation, the 48-inch diameter entrance should be tilted to a 60 degree angle. The step ladder is designed to that angle. The 36 inch diameter exit tunnel is designed for a vertical configuration to facilitate the lowering of supplies by a rope or small crane. The center floor panels are removable in 4 ft. lengths, down the entire length of the shelter. This provides easy access to supplies and keeps the shelter free of clutter. The tilt made it possible for Sharon and me to get into the shelter.

The only thing I hadn't purchased yet was radios. I had my mind made up to the Kenwood TS-2000 and a Cobra SSB CB radio. Derek persuaded me I need the radios far more than I needed the Tac-50. He said he'd stay and help me install a telescoping mast, a US Towers MA770 with pull down motor. The antenna included a MFJ-1798 10-band, a Comet tri-band, a Diamond DJ-130 and StarDuster CB antenna.

### Fort Navajo – Chapter 3

*Ira Hayes,  
Ira Hayes*

*Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war*

*Gather round me people there's a story I would tell  
About a brave young Indian you should remember well  
From the land of the Pima Indian  
A proud and noble band  
Who farmed the Phoenix valley in Arizona land*

*Down the ditches for a thousand years  
The water grew Ira's peoples' crops  
'Till the white man stole the water rights  
And the sparklin' water stopped*

*Now Ira's folks were hungry  
And their land grew crops of weeds  
When war came, Ira volunteered  
And forgot the white man's greed*

*Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war*

*There they battled up Iwo Jima's hill,  
Two hundred and fifty men  
But only twenty-seven lived to walk back down again*

*And when the fight was over  
And when Old Glory raised  
Among the men who held it high  
Was the Indian, Ira Hayes*

*Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war*

*Ira returned a hero*

*Celebrated through the land  
He was wined and speeched and honored;  
Everybody shook his hand*

*But he was just a Pima Indian  
No water, no crops, no chance  
At home nobody cared what Ira'd done  
And when did the Indians dance*

*Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war*

*Then Ira started drinkin' hard;  
Jail was often his home  
They'd let him raise the flag and lower it  
like you'd throw a dog a bone!*

*He died drunk one mornin'  
Alone in the land he fought to save  
Two inches of water in a lonely ditch  
Was a grave for Ira Hayes*

*Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Indian  
Nor the Marine that went to war*

*Yeah, call him drunken Ira Hayes  
But his land is just as dry  
And his ghost is lyin' thirsty  
In the ditch where Ira died*

o

This antenna was one of the most popular, and also probably one of the most hyped antennas back in the mid 70's. Its basic construction was nothing more than a  $\frac{1}{4}$  wave ground plane (9 foot radiator, and 3- 9 foot radial elements), yet Antenna Specialists claimed a gain figure of 5 db for it. Despite this seeming inconsistency and possible embellishment of spec's, many people bought into the hype and ran them. This only goes to reinforce the notion that many CB operators would believe almost anything they read. On the plus side though, this antenna required no loading or matching coils, and would hold a low SWR over a fairly wide band of frequencies. The SWR would also not change in rainy weather (A common problem with coil matched  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{5}{8}$  wave ground plane antennas). The lack of matching coils also permitted some fairly high power to be

run through it. Mechanically, there wasn't much wind loading so therefore it ended up being a fairly sturdy antenna, with the exception of the fiberglass spreaders on the elements and the vertical radiator stud in the hub. These weak points would become apparent when the antenna was exposed to too many years of high winds and ice storms. In more temperate environments, this antenna would last for many years. It was a matter of principle with me; I was one of those thousands who had a StarDuster in the '70s. I think my base station was a Washington back then.

I bought a Galaxy DX2547. Derek wanted me to put in a CB beam antenna with a rotor. I thought he was nuts, but he said that as close as we were to I-40, it would be a good idea.

"Can I talk you into staying?"

"I want to look around back home to see what I can find for a job first, Dad."

"The door will always be open. You should check out those guard opportunities before you leave. I'll take the remainder of the money and stock up on food and ammo. I don't know that the Tac-50 is in my future. If I can save up for it in time, maybe."

"In time for what?"

"In time for the stuff to hit the fan."

"You meant it, didn't you? That stuff you put in that letter."

"It's not a question of if, Derek, it's a question of when and what."

I had voted for George W. Bush twice, the same as I had for his father. Unfortunately, the son wasn't the father. I lost hope for the Administration when Collin Powell resigned. Powell should have been President.

If you take I-40, you use exit 245 to get to our place. Sharon will be in her sewing room working on a quilt and I'll be at my computer, typing another yarn. They couldn't stay long, Mary had her job and Derek had to find one. He did check in on the positions at the prison and they seemed interested in him. I told him the XD .45 was his Christmas present and Sharon gave Mary Wal-Mart shopping cards for her and the kids.

We finally got phone service and an internet connection, Qwest and Cable One. Sharon let Amy and Lorrie know our new phone number and I sent Damon and Derek emails with the information. Derek replied and wanted to know if the prison was still hiring. I sent him their email address and told him to ask for himself. I was getting close to having the money saved up for my Tac-50 rifle, again. It was truly amazing how little money we spent now that we had our own electricity and water and no house payment.

We didn't put in a lawn because it would use water and grow, which was fine until someone had to mow it. It was dusty here and no amount of work could keep the dust out of the house. Sharon had this little routine where she dusted one room each day and vacuumed the carpet once a week. I did the dishes, we didn't use many and I got into the habit of loading the dishwasher as we dirtied dishes and running it at night. Somehow we got Missy and Scrappy trained to go outside and do their business. The only 2 cats we brought were Pyewacket and Sassy. Life was actually easier now than it had been in Palmdale.

◦

I dislike anyone who draws maps in the sand and gives aid and comfort to our enemies. Six-hundred yards was the measured distance of the shot I took in several of the stories to shoot Geraldo Rivera. It's just a shame Wolf Blitzer wasn't with him. Law and Order made an episode about Geraldo and his line drawing. In it, the reporter shot himself and blamed it on a Marine who hated him because the map caused a friend of his to get killed. Season 14, Episode 8: Embedded – 19 November 2003. (Episode 309) After a reporter accused of causing the deaths of soldiers with whom he was embedded in Iraq by reporting on their troop movements is shot and wounded on the eve of his return to the front, the ballistics report indicates that the gun belonged to one of the dead soldiers, leading the detectives to uncover who brought the gun back from the front and committed the crime. This episode is "ripped from the headlines" of the Geraldo Rivera scandal during the war in Iraq. Everything you wanted to know about anything is on the internet if you ask your search engine the right question. I like Yahoo and Fleataxi likes Google.

We're both retired, that's why we're both still writing. He's cleaning his stuff up and I could care. The reason we poke so much fun at each other is that we're good friends. If this story is written while Derek is still in Iraq. It assumes that with all the prayers for him, he'll get home ok. If he doesn't, it will fall into the category of what could have been.

I like to give plugs for companies who make some of the things we all need (but probably can't afford). Utah Shelter Systems and Radmeters4U are two examples. I noticed that since I've been talking about Tractor Supply, they're airing ads on TV; I like the one with rabbit. If you decide to put in a generator, considering what USS says and go for diesel as opposed to propane or gasoline. The low rpm units will run 2 years with only minor service. Kohler and Onan are good brands, as are others, but these are made in the USA. The property description came from an ad on a local realtor's website for Winslow, AZ. Buy your KIO<sub>3</sub> from Frugal; he needs the money to keep the website up. Even the Berkey water filters are illegal in the ERK. I'll probably add a winch to my wheelchair so I can hoist the Tac-50 into position, if I ever buy one.

◦



"I haven't found a decent job. I think I'll come out there and live with you and go to work for the prison. Mary and the kids will come when school is out."

"I'll be damned."

"Why do you say that?"

"Praying does work. We figure something out for housing for when she comes out. For now, you can live with us."

"I'll be there in about 18 hours."

"Are you going to drive straight through?"

"Yeah, money is a little tight."

"Hokay, see you tomorrow."

Eighteen hours meant he'd get here about the time I usually go to bed. I figured I'd best stay up so our guard dog, Missy, didn't lick him to death. Scrappy would wake the whole house with his barking. I sure hoped he'd bring his FAL, we'd do some shooting. The only thing that would change would be our food bill, assuming he still ate like there wouldn't be a tomorrow. It was logical to assume he'd transfer to the 855th MP Company down in Phoenix, only a 2 hour drive.

"Hey kid, have any trouble?"

"Nope. Just about out of gas, though."

"Here's \$50, fill your tank and keep the change. While I was waiting, I checked on the Arizona National Guard. They have an MP Company in Phoenix. I didn't see any armor units in Arizona or New Mexico. I assume you've had all the training so, it gives you one option."

"Colorado?"

"Nope and not Utah, either."

"Crap, I have my own tank now."

"What do they have in Arizona?"

"Artillery. Being a prison guard might work in your favor being an MP or vice versa. I checked up on the place, they have around 1,800 inmates."

"What about a place to live?"

"You'll stay with us until Mary is ready to come. Ever live in a mobile home before?"

"No. Well, we visited you in Davenport."

"And you've stay here last Thanksgiving."

"Expensive?"

"Not for what you get. I'll be able to give you maybe \$20,000 down on a home and you can run off our utilities."

"You have that much saved?"

"No, but I will. I've got enough for the rifle, but you having a home is more important."

"How much was this one?"

"In the fifties. You might find a repo for under thirty."

"Free electricity?"

"Mostly free, the inverter is only 12kw so if we're running off the batteries, you're only going to have about 50 amps available. We have to be sure you have a swamp cooler instead of regular air conditioning. I hate running that generator."

"I'm not so sure I like you buying me a home."

"I'm not, I'm loaning you a down payment is all. If you want to add an extra inverter, they're about \$800 a kilowatt. Figure 10 grand without the batteries."

"How expensive are the batteries?"

"These are Lifeline AGM type 8D deep cycle batteries, they aren't cheap, but you can buy one a month until you have enough."

"How many is enough?"

"That is up to you, Derek. Hey, let's get some sleep, we can talk tomorrow."

"It is tomorrow."

"Yeah, but you know what I meant."

o

Derek was up early, but Sharon warned him not to wake me. By the time I did wake up, he'd gotten the application and submitted it. I guess he had to take some kind of test, it was a government job. I wasn't worried, he has an IQ of nearly 170, and he could pass the test in his sleep. I had a plan and it involved Damon, but I didn't tell Derek, Mary and Damon didn't get along. I'd get Derek employed and settled in a home and then start working on Damon. I didn't figure he'd come, but I'd get the seed planted so when the time came, he grab his kids and split. If they wouldn't come he'd have a clear conscience. Britney was born in '91 and she was 15 going on 16. She was old enough to make up her own mind and when Damon was in Illinois chasing that skirt (Dawn), it didn't really bother him. He was on disability anyway and what did it matter where he lived? He could get a new representative payee down here.

If I loaned Derek 10 grand, that would give him at least 20% down if he couldn't find a repo, 33% if he could, and I could still buy my Tac-50. And while he was waiting to find out if he got the job, he could sharpen my knives. First Blood first and then Rambo III, the knife I intended to give to Damon. And when they were sharp, he could sharpen the knife I had for Sharon. I thought I had it all figured out, and wrote it down in case if somehow forgot my own plan. I could always add 2 more pairs of bunks to the shelter and fix it up to sleep another 4 people. Not bad for a senile old man, who knew the real story of Murphy's Law.

Yes, he got the job, did you think he wouldn't? He also transferred into that ANG MP Company down in Phoenix, but he wasn't particularly happy about that. Did I remember to thank the Squirrels for suggesting I just pack it in and move Arizona? If I didn't, THANK YOU. The wife's happy, she has the new sewing machine, I'm happy I got my guns, one of my kids living here and I have a plan to move the other one of these days. I also plan to have my monster rifle by the time the youngest has his new house.

Bought the suppressors; in a couple of months, as soon as the BATFE approves the purchase, I can pick them up. I know I shouldn't have bought the suppressor for the Tac-50 until I had the rifle. However, I figured since I have to wait for the BATFE clearance I'd kill 2 birds with 1 stone. Because I needed the Coconino County Sheriff in Flagstaff to sign off on the suppressors, I also applied for a CCW. Derek was hauling me around to take care of business. There's enough paperwork to discourage the average guy, that's part of their secret.

Derek started to work and we started looking for a good repo'd home. By March, we'd found one. That's March of 2007 if you're keeping track of the time. It was a Fleetwood Entertainer model (floor plan B). We ended up loaning him \$10,000 so he'd have 20% down. It was a pretty fancy home, wouldn't have minded having that myself. We ran water lines, electricity and septic. He decided to mount it on those concrete road dividers instead of stands. The price included delivery and installation. His payments were \$286.57 a month for 20 years.

Derek started to buy batteries, one a month because they were expensive. He decided on a 3,600 watt inverter, just enough to keep the appliances running. He told me he

wouldn't get over 6 batteries to begin with. For the moment, he'd continue to live with us, because he didn't have any furniture or anything to cook with. He called Mary to tell her they finally had their own home and referred her to the Fleetwood website so she could look at the floor plan. The story about the home being on the market was rather sad. A couple retired from Illinois and bought the home, putting 20% down. She kept it in immaculate condition, but they were killed in a car accident on the way to church. He'd had a heart attack and the car had gone off the road in Tonto National Forest.

"That home you got is just like new."

"It even has the 40" TV, Dad."

"If you get the Playboy Channel, I'll come over and watch TV with you."

"Fat chance, I'll get basic cable when Mary gets here."

"When is she coming?"

"June, as soon as school gets out."

"I ordered my rifle."

"The Tac-50?"

"Yes, sir. Now we can snipe cars on I-40 if you want to."

"Getting your kicks on Route 66?"

"That isn't what I meant. I-40 is a major thruway. If TSHTF, we're stilling out here in the middle of nowhere and could make an inviting target. They can see the whole place from the highway."

"Are you paranoid?"

"Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't after you."

"Mel Gibson, Julia Roberts?"

"I don't know. Mel said, *A good conspiracy is unprovable. I mean, if you can prove it, it means they screwed up somewhere along the line.* I saw the quote on Frugal's."

"Now, are you going to tell me why Winslow?"

"Already did, Sharon picked it. I didn't even know she listened to the Eagles."

"You were in Hotel California too long."

"What's the line, *You can check out anytime you like, but you can never leave*, we should have left there in '92. If I knew then what I know now, we would have."

"You always wanted to live in Arizona, you should be happy."

"Derek, I'm 64. My body is about what you'd expect for an 80-year-old man. I know I did it to myself, but that doesn't make it any easier. I got no complaints, but man, would I love to be 30 and know what I know now. What was Iraq like?"

"Very unpleasant. After Dan got killed, we became more conscious of our environment. In a way, I'm glad I went; now I know what a war really is."

"Did you get it out of your system?"

"Get what out of my system?"

"Volunteering."

"That depends on what happens."

o

"Say, could I get you to do something for me?"

"What do you need?"

"A rifle range."

"How long?"

"Oh, 600 yards."

"That's about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a mile; can you even see that far?"

"I can with a scope."

"The effective range of an M14 rifle is 500-yards."

"Yes... but this is a Super Match. It's capable of sub-MOA fire. Could you humor me?"

"You're going to have to grade in a back stop."

"I'll arrange for that. How high should I make it?"

"In your case, about 10'."

I found a contractor who was willing to grade in a flat shooting range and put in a 10' high back stop. He wanted to know if it was going to be a public range. I told him no, but if he needed a place to shoot, come see Derek or me and we'd work something out. I also told him I'd give him a 5 point veteran's preference. He was wearing a USMC utility cover. I figured once a Marine, always a Marine.

It turned out to be a good idea, I couldn't shoot worth a chit. Geraldo might be safe at 600'. Al had been a Sergeant in the Corps, but I called him Gunny anyway, he liked that. With practice, he was consistently shooting 4" groups at 600-yards. A long about May, I finally was able to pick up the suppressors and the Tac-50 came in. Derek helped me and we mounted the Jet suppressor on the Tac-50. I could barely pick it up. Gunny worked for one of the local contractors, he wasn't the actual contractor and his name was Alberto Martinez. Al was half Mexican and half Navajo. I didn't figure that a likely combination, but I didn't ask; it was probably one of those Romeo and Juliet deals.

I put *the vanishing race* in my yahoo search engine. It popped up, *The vanishing race – Navajo*. It's not that far to the Res from where we live here west of Winslow. Anyway, Derek and I had a new buddy, Al. But he really liked it when I called him Gunny. Al thought maybe the show I mentioned was episode 117 that aired 18 Oct 57 titled, *The Last Navajo* (Rin-Tin-Tin). The song from Rin Tin Tin:

*An Indian rode along one day  
On a lonely mountain trail  
And gazed below with a heart of woe  
Where the prairie schooners sail*

*A vision formed in a mortal storm  
In the dust of the wagon train  
A vanished race appeared in space  
And he sang this sad refrain*

*Oh buffalo rolling on  
Like the tide to the sunset  
Soon the herd will be gone*

*See now the paleface they come  
Like the shadows of nighttime  
O'er this land that I love*

*Then, like the eagles that fly  
Like the eagles we die  
When our wings are tied*

*Now my blanket I roll  
And I ride from the valley*

*Of the brave Navajo*

*Then, like the eagles that fly  
Like the eagles we die  
When our wings are tied*

*Now my blanket I roll  
And I ride from the valley  
Of the brave Navajo*

*Soon the time will be gone...  
Navajo*

Anyway, we got to talking about Native Americans. It seems that everyone has some sort of cause they support and if Sharon and I had one, it was support for Native Americans. Not that we carry placards in parades, or write long essays to post on the web. Quite the contrary, it's just how we feel about the way our ancestors treated the Indians. A very long time ago I had met Russell Means and Dennis Banks when they were on the run. AIM's original mission included protecting indigenous people from police abuse, using CB radios and police scanners to get to the scenes of alleged crimes involving indigenous people before or as police arrived, for the purpose of documenting or preventing police brutality. AIM Patrols still work the streets of Minneapolis.

In 1973, AIM activists barricaded themselves in the hamlet of Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. They were alleged to have taken eleven hostages, which led to a seventy-one-day standoff with federal agents. In the ensuing trials most accused AIM members were acquitted. At Pine Ridge in 1975, a gun battle between AIM members and FBI agents resulted in the shooting deaths of a two Indigenous American, Joseph Stuntz and Anna Mae Aquash. An unrelated incident during the same time period resulted in the murder of two FBI agents by Leonard Peltier, Jack Coler and Ronald Williams. Many AIM activists claim that the AIM members who shot at the FBI agents were engaged in self-defense, and thus the killing was not a murder. Indeed, two of Peltier's co-defendants in the agents' murder were acquitted on grounds of self-defense in a separate trial. Peltier's critics, on the other hand, point out that one of the agents was shot and killed at close range after being wounded, with his hands up. This killing and the subsequent conviction of Peltier have been major bones of contention between activists and FBI agents.

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 4

*Desperado, why don't you come to your senses?  
You've been out ridin' fences for so long now  
Oh, you're a hard one  
I know that you got your reasons  
These things that are pleasin' you  
Can hurt you somehow*

*Don't you draw the queen of diamonds, boy  
She'll beat you if she's able  
You know the queen of hearts is always your best bet*

*Now it seems to me, some fine things  
Have been laid upon your table  
But you only want the ones that you can't get*

*Desperado, oh, you ain't gettin' no younger  
Your pain and your hunger, they're drivin' you home  
And freedom, oh-oh freedom, well that's just some people talkin'  
Your prison is walking through this world all alone*

*Don't your feet get cold in the winter time?  
The sky won't snow and the sun won't shine  
It's hard to tell the night time from the day  
You're loosin' all your highs and lows  
Ain't it funny how the feeling goes away?*

*Desperado, why don't you come to your senses?  
Come down from your fences, open the gate  
It may be rainin', but there's a rainbow above you  
You better let somebody love you, before it's too late*

o

*Thunderheart* is a crime movie directed by Michael Apted with Fred Ward and Val Kilmer. Val Kilmer plays an FBI agent investigating a murder on a Native American reservation. It is based on true events, including the rise of the American Indian Movement.

It seems that the Navajo had their own *Trail of Tears* they called *The Long March*. The Long Walk of the Navajo, also called the Long Walk to Bosque Redondo, was an Indian removal effort of the US government in 1863 and 1864.

The plan called for the removal of the Navajo from their native lands, which were called, in the Navajo language, Dinetah. (Dinetah included land from northeastern Arizona through western New Mexico, and north into Utah and Colorado.) The Navajo cultivated



crops on the fertile floors of canyons, including Canyon de Chelly, home to the ancient Anasazi people.

Some Navajo managed to escape the Walk, variously surviving in the territory of the Chiricahua Apache, the Grand Canyon, on Navajo Mountain and in Utah. By 1868 the experiment – meant to be the first Indian reservation west of Indian Territory – was declared a miserable failure, the victim of poor planning, disease, crop infestation and generally poor conditions for agriculture (harvests failed in each of the successive years of 1864, 1865, 1866 and 1867). Having survived the ordeal, the various peoples interned at the camp were permitted to return from whence they came, and the Navajo were granted a 3.5 million acre (14,000 km<sup>2</sup>) area where they had previously resided. On June 18, 1868, the once-scattered bands of people who called themselves Diné, now united as one, set off on the return journey, the *Long Walk Home*.

The Navajo Wars were fought during the nineteenth century between the US military and many western tribes. These wars depleted the Native Americans' numbers, divided their leadership, and drove them onto reservations, often located far from their homelands and in inhospitable climates.

As was often the case, the US military fought the Navajos and Apaches largely for their lands. The Civil War brought many soldiers to the Southwest, including General James H. Carleton, who decided to remove the Navajos and Apaches to reservations so that the lands of the Rio Grande Valley could be used for settlement and mining. Carleton enlisted the one-time friend of the Navajos, Kit Carson, to force them from their homelands through starvation.

Carson burned the Navajos' farms, stole their livestock, and finally destroyed the villages in their last stronghold, Canyon de Chelly. Without food or shelter to sustain them through the winter, over 3,000 Navajos surrendered and made what is called "the long walk of the Navajos" to the reservation at Fort Sumner (SE New Mexico). Hundreds of Navajos died along the way and after arriving at the fort. A few bands of Navajos held out, living in the mountains. But one by one, these bands and their leaders – Barboncito, Armijo, and finally Manuelito – were captured or surrendered and taken to the reservation.

◦

I used to think Kit Carson was an American hero. Oh, well... In November, 1864 Carson was sent by General Carleton to deal with the Natives in western Texas. Carson and his troopers met a combined force of Kiowa, Comanche and Cheyenne numbering over 1,500 at the ruins of Adobe Walls. In what was known as the battle of Adobe Walls the Native force led by Dohäsan made several assaults on Carson's forces which were supported by 10 Mountain howitzers. Carson inflicted heavy losses on the attacking warriors before burning the Indian's camp and lodges and returning to Fort Bascom.

A few days later Col. John M. Chivington led US troops in a massacre at Sand Creek (Colorado). Chivington boasted that he had surpassed Carson and will soon be known as the great Indian killer. Carson was outraged at the massacre and openly denounced Chivington's actions. However Sand Creek and Adobe Walls helped bring the Comanches to sign the Little Rock Treaty of 1865. In October 1865 General Carleton recommended that Carson be awarded the brevet rank of brigadier-general, "for gallantry in the battle of Valverde, and for distinguished conduct and gallantry in the wars against the Mescalero Apaches and against the Navajo Indians of New Mexico." The Sand Creek Massacre is the subject of the 1970 movies *Soldier Blue* and the massacre of an Indian village in *Little Big Man* were based on the event.

The Battle of Bitter Creek only happened on TV (*Branded*, 1965). The Battle of the Little Big Horn was probably the few times the US military got what was coming to them during *The Indian Wars*.

*Tell General Howard I know his heart. What he told me before, I have it in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed; Looking Glass is dead, too-hul-hul-sote is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who say yes or no. He who led on the young men is dead. It is cold, and we have no blankets; the little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are – perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children, and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs! I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.* (Chief Joseph)

His name might be Gunny Martinez, but he sure knew the history of *The Indian Wars*. He told me that the Navajo, unlike most other tribes, required you to be at least 25% Navajo before you could be listed as a member of the tribe. He was half and half and qualified. He asked me if I knew about Lori Piestewa, the Hopi Indian who was killed in Iraq. I told him I knew about her but not many details. She was the first American Female Soldier killed in combat. Her death led to a rare joint prayer gathering between members of the Hopi and Navajo tribes, which have had a centuries-old rivalry.

The attack made Jessica Lynch famous. US Special Forces later plucked her from an Iraqi hospital and rushed her to safety, and the media seized on the daring rescue to create a tale of American heroism and valor. But the real story of what happened in Nasiriyah that day – and the clear warning it offered of things to come – involves a different soldier, one who gave her life to protect her friends. Lori Piestewa, born and raised a Hopi on the Navajo reservation in Arizona, became the first American woman to die in the war, and the first Native American woman ever to die in combat on foreign soil. Only twenty-three years old, Piestewa saw herself as a Hopi warrior, part of a centuries-old tradition developed by a people who once resisted an invasion and occupation by the US military – much as the Iraqis are today. She went to war, but she believed above all in peace, in doing no harm to others. "I'm not trying to be a hero," she told a friend just before the invasion. "I just want to get through this crap and go home."

The high desert country around Tuba City, Arizona, where Lori Piestewa grew up, looks a lot like southern Iraq. Vast, open stretches dominate the barren landscape, punctuated now and then by red sandstone mesas. As a child, Lori spent weekends racing her three-wheeled ATV across the sand dunes north of town. Only six inches of rain fall here each year – about the same as in Nasiriyah. When the producers of *Three Kings*, the George Clooney movie about the first Gulf War, were looking for a stand-in for Iraq, they decided to film in the Arizona desert.

If Lori had been born a century earlier, the United States government would have considered her an enemy. In the late 1800s, the US Cavalry invaded Hopi lands and decreed that the fields now belonged to white settlers. The Hopi fought back, not with guns or arrows, but with nonviolent resistance. (The name Hopi means "Peaceful People.") In defiance of the military, Hopi farmers continued to cultivate their lands. The Army arrested nineteen Hopi leaders and sent them to Alcatraz, where some spent as long as two years in solitary.

Piestewa was raised in this Hopi tradition of nonviolence, which emphasizes helping others, starting at home, with one's own family and clan, and extending outward to include the entire community and nation. (Her father, Terry, is Hopi; her mother is Hispanic.) As a baby, Lori had her hair washed in a Hopi ceremony and was given the name Köcha-Hon-Mana, White Bear Girl. "We Hopi were put on this earth to be peaceful," explains Terry, a short, round man with graying hair and a soft voice.

Terry Piestewa fought in Vietnam, but it's not something he is proud of. He was drafted and didn't want to go to prison like two of his brothers-in-law who had refused to fight in Korea. Asked about his tour of duty, he folds his arms across his chest and his eyes fill with tears.

"A lot of us that did do harm, we have that on our conscience," he says. "It's going to stay, and there's nothing that can take that away."

Maybe watching all those Westerns with people getting scalped makes people think that's what a warrior is," says Lori's oldest brother, Wayland. But for Hopis, he says, being a warrior has nothing to do with hurting people. "My sister is a warrior because she did the right thing, the honorable thing: going to Iraq when she didn't have to, because she felt it was the ethical and moral thing to do. That's what being a warrior is about: doing what's right, even when it's difficult and means sacrifice."

Lori never shied away from doing what was difficult. "She was really strong-willed," says her brother Adam. "We were always telling her not to do things, and she'd just go ahead and do them." The boys of Tuba City learned that if they were going to get in White Bear Girl's face, they'd better be prepared to fight. Lori was small for her age – she would top out at five foot three – but even the bigger boys were intimidated by her. "She never backed down," says Adam. "She was never afraid to take on anybody."

Most of the time, though, Lori used those same traits in the Hopi way: to help whatever group she was part of. When she was eight years old, she played shortstop for the local Little League team. On the day before a championship game, the coach was hitting practice grounders when one ricocheted off the iron-hard dirt and struck Lori full in the face, breaking her nose. Despite two blackened eyes that made her look like a panda, she insisted on playing the next day. The team was counting on her, she argued. Her family gave in. With Lori at shortstop, the team won the championship.

"She couldn't not play," says Adam. This wasn't about choice – it was about duty.

◦

The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community is comprised of two Native American tribes: The Pima, or "Akimel Au-Authm," (River People); and the Maricopa, or "Xalychidom Piipaash," (People who live toward the water)

The Maricopa tribes were small bands that lived along the lower Gila and Colorado rivers. In the early 1800's they migrated toward Pima villages. The Pima, known as a friendly tribe, established a relationship with the Maricopa. Both tribes provided protection against the Yuman and Apache tribes.

The Pima believe they are the descendants of the "Hohokam," (those who have gone) an ancient civilization who lived in Arizona nearly two thousand years, dating as far back as 300BC. The Hohokam farmed the Salt River Valley and created elaborate canal irrigation systems throughout the valley area; that system, now modernized is still used today.

The Pima were strong runners, basket weavers and farmers who could make the desert bloom. They served as trusted scouts for the US Cavalry and continue to serve their country today in various forms of the armed forces.

The Pima's are well known for their basket weaving techniques, intricately woven they are made watertight. The Maricopa, known for their red clay pottery work, created various forms of jars and bowls. Both forms of artwork are made of natural materials and can be viewed at the Community's Hoo-hoogam Ki Museum.

The Pima and Maricopa tribes together, comprise the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

◦

Gunny said the Navajos forbade alcohol on the Res, but they were plenty of towns around that were more than happy to sell Indians whiskey. One of the primary problems of the Navajo had been diabetes. We set up the new Tac-50 rifle at 600-yards and he showed me how to shoot it. Didn't take him long to get it zeroed in and start shooting killer groups on the silhouette target we were using. There was room, so we moved the

shooting table 400 yards further back. Son-of-a-bi..., it was clear who would be shooting the Tac-50 and his name wasn't Derek.

"Tom, you carry the M1A as the backup rifle and be my observer."

"Why Gunny?"

"Because you bought the spotting scope."

I had a Burris Landmark Spotting Scope 20X-60X-80mm on the Burris tripod. A .50 caliber hole was easy to see at 1,000-yards. He even tried the M1A at 1,000-yards, but that was a long way for the 175gr. bullets to carry. The specs on the M-118LR ammo were: extreme horizontal spread at 1000 meters 10.3" avg., extreme vertical spread at 1000 meters 14". Gunny would hit you, but it might not be a fatal shot all of the time. I hit the target the first time I shot. I quit while I was ahead.

"That's it for the shooting, Gunny."

"Why?"

"Because the .50 caliber match ammo I buy runs about \$5 a round. I'm saving the brass to get it reloaded."

"Ok. Why did you buy expensive ammo like that?"

"When your life depends on the quality of your ammo, you don't want ammo made by the lowest bidder."

"You worry too much. I mean what could happen in Winslow, Arizona?"

"Well, for one thing, it has a meteor crater. But, other than that, I can't think of anything except maybe that bird flu. I hear they don't think it's going to be a problem."

"What about the Chinese?"

"Which ones?"

"PRC."

"Well they're busy building up their military using American dollars to buy the stuff they can't build from Russia. We could take their whole navy out with 3 carrier strike groups."

"Do you think it will happen?"

"I write about it happening in a lot of my stories, but how the hell should I know?"

"You must think something is going to happen, I heard you have a bomb shelter."

"But I don't know what. My motto has always been, prepare for the worst and hope for the best. Say, how far would you say it is from here to the Interstate?"

"Maybe 1,000-yards, why?"

"Just curious."

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Smile when you drive by... Republican or Democrat? Muslim?

I'll bet you read where I said I could barely pick the Tac-50 up, didn't you? If a Marine can't shoot a tight group at 1,000 yards with the M1A, what chance do I have? Two: slim and none. Just wave at old Tom when you drive by and I'll wave back, if I'm on the front patio. It's more likely I'll be in the house, typing, trying once again to reword the same old tired story.

Well, we did get out of ERK. Hmm, if a person called it the, *Jolly Environmentalist Republik of Kalifornia* the acronym would be JERK. If you don't like Jolly, any word beginning with 'J' will do nicely. JERK sort of fit because it was the earthquake state and it did jerk a lot. It also described most of the people in elected office. Come to think of it, it described a lot of the people who lived there.

In all my years in ERK, I'd only seen one live snake in the wild, a sidewinder. That changed when we got to Winslow and the only way I could let Missy and Scrappy out was to walk them. We were very careful with Sassy too, he liked to go outside and I wasn't sure he'd ever seen a pit viper. I had those walking sticks and made it a point to carry one. I slapped the bushes whenever we came near one. If there was a snake there he'd rattle and I'd run (walk away fast).

That was one of two negatives associated with the move, the other being who to vote for. In ERK, I'd wait to see who Feinstein and Boxer support and vote for the other guy. Here, I kept it simple and voted straight Republican. My bride favored Democrats but over the years, she'd more or less converted, or so she said. She let me fill out her sample ballot so either we voted the same or cancelled each other out. Everyone knows how I feel about the media, politicians and lawyers so I won't explain it for the 44<sup>th</sup> time.

Coconino County had only 19 tornadoes from 1880 to 2000 with 0 injuries and 0 killed and the biggest being a F2. Navajo County had 6 and the largest was a F1. The biggest hazards were floods and fires. Derek helped and we kept the brush removed. It not only prevented fires, it gave the snakes fewer places to hide. According to Shane Connor's maps of Arizona, there was some kind of nuclear target in our general area. It appeared to be Holbrook because it wasn't in this County. Flagstaff was a potential target, but it was 65 miles away.

What did Holbrook have that made it a potential target? The only thing I could think of was that power plant. Take that out and a whole lot of people would be going without lights. The map didn't distinguish between primary, secondary and tertiary targets.

"What are you doing?"

"Putting in a garden, Dad."

"Right, that sand is going to grow 8" tomatoes."

"I think it will if we add enough water."

"I'm not going to try and stop you. But I don't believe that I'll help. I will get my 9422 out and watch for varmints."

"You won't need to; I'm going to string some chicken wire to keep the rabbits out."

"You'd better use a very fine mesh."

"Why?"

"Cause when you get the plants to grow, it will provide shade for snakes and be very inviting to rats. If the rats get in there, the snakes will follow."

"You shouldn't kill snakes."

"I won't, the bullets will."

"I'm serious."

"So am I."

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Where was I? I remember, May. We're set up to repel the Chinese invasion, Derek is growing veggies and my phone bill is running \$200 a month, what with Derek calling Flippin all of the time. I'm looking forward to Mary getting here. The phone bill won't go down much, but it will be on him. I hope he'll get Mary to call her folks at night. Even with the high phone bill, we were still money ahead and I was saving up again.

What for? Well, I have 3,000-gallons of propane and a generator, what do you think what for? More propane that 50REOZJB could burn through. The shelter wasn't quite complete either; I wanted to add a compact washer and electric dryer. Sitting in a shelter, you want to get close to God and they say cleanliness is next to Godliness. Am I having fun yet? Ask me tomorrow.

Derek needed a propane tank anyway so if he put in a 3,000-gallon tank, we'd have twice as much propane available if TSHTF. It was time to get out the slide ruler and figure this out. In the shelter, we'd probably be using 25% power or 1.5gph of propane. Assuming of course we didn't have wind for the turbines. We wouldn't have to run the generator all that much depending on how many batteries we had. I reckon I needed a 5 dimensional slide ruler, too many variables here. Screw it, we'd have enough power regardless of what happened because it was triple redundant. That's what a person gets from working in the space program, too many layers of redundancy. If they built it right in the first place, they wouldn't need so many backups.

*"Well, I'm a standin' on a corner in Winslow, Arizona."*

It's a bitch when the mind goes...

You do know where I put my inverter, don't you? In the shelter, they generate heat when they convert the AC to DC to charge the batteries and when they convert the juice in the batteries back to 120v. I had the batteries under the floor of the shelter. I had 12 of the units and they weighted about a ton. Not each, but they were over a foot long and very heavy. If the generator didn't kick in, we had enough propane for about 2-3 years of cooking and heating. These were Lifeline AGM type 8D deep cycle batteries (165 pounds each).

I wasn't bad enough that the 24 acres were sand and brush with a few trees; we had to go and remove the brush because of the snakes; forgot to put a burning permit too. Ignorance of the law is no excuse, he said, when he wrote me the ticket. Just my luck there was a deputy in the area. He wanted to know what I was going to do if the fire got away from me. I told him it was sitting right there and we cleared all of the brush before we burned it, so how could it? I didn't tell him we had a 6" well and a pump that could pump 1,500gpm through a 1½" fire hose, but he didn't ask.

Not only do I write my own stories, I sometimes read them. Buying a fire engine was stupid unless you were rich and we weren't rich. Besides, we weren't in Kansas. This here was chili pepper country. So, naturally I planted a couple of plants since Derek already had a garden. No I don't know what kind they were, but the plants were green and the peppers were small. I'll tell you when they mature and I bite into one.

"You like jalapeños?"

"Why?"

"That's what you planted. You have one jalapeño plant and one Anaheim or New Mexico pepper."

"Oh, I did? Can I make Chiles Rellenos?"



"They usually use Poblano chilies, but you can substitute. You like those?"

"Gunny, I always order Chiles Rellenos when I eat in a Mexican restaurant."

"Always?"

"Always. I don't care for their tacos and I can take or leave enchiladas. I've always liked Mexican restaurant food and most Chinese restaurant food."

"What's your favorite Chinese dish?"

"Mongolian beef provided it's made with green onions."

"Are you a picky eater?"

"You don't know the half of it; I make George H. W. Bush seem like an amateur. He doesn't like broccoli."

"So who is running the country Bush Sr. or Bush Jr.?"

"It has to be Jr.; Sr. wouldn't make half the mistakes he's made."

"Do you really think the war will be over by the end of the year?"

"No, but it's hard to say whether the Iraqis will let us stay beyond then. Sr. would have never have gotten us into Iraq. He had the chance once and refused. His reasons for not doing so are the very problems facing us today over there."

"What do you mean?"

"In a foreign policy move that would later be questioned, President Bush achieved his stated objectives of 'liberating' Kuwait and forcing Iraqi withdrawal, then ordered a cessation of combat operations – allowing Saddam Hussein to stay in power. His Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney noted that invading the country would get the United States 'bogged down in the quagmire inside Iraq.' Bush later explained that he did not give the order to overthrow the Iraqi government because it would have 'incurred incalculable human and political costs... We would have been forced to occupy Baghdad and, in effect, rule Iraq!' (Man, was he ever right!)"

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 5

*Every time I think that I'm the only one who's lonely  
Someone calls on me  
And every now and then I spend my time in rhyme and verse  
And curse those faults in me*

*And then along comes Mary  
And does she want to give me kicks, and be my steady chick  
And give me pick of memories  
Or maybe rather gather tales of all the fails and tribulations  
No one ever sees*

*When we met I was sure out to lunch  
Now my empty cup tastes as sweet as the punch*

*When vague desire is the fire in the eyes of chicks  
Whose sickness is the games they play  
And when the masquerade is played and neighbor folks make jokes  
As who is most to blame today*

*And then along comes Mary  
And does she want to set them free, and let them see reality  
From where she got her name  
And will they struggle much when told that such a tender touch as hers  
Will make them not the same*

*When we met I was sure out to lunch  
Now my empty cup tastes as sweet as the punch*

*And when the morning of the warning's passed, the gassed  
And flaccid kids are flung across the stars  
The psychodramas and the traumas gone  
The songs are left unsung and hung upon the scars*

*And then along comes Mary  
And does she want to see the stains, the dead remains of all the pains  
She left the night before  
Or will their waking eyes reflect the lies, and make them  
Realize their urgent cry for sight no more*

*When we met I was sure out to lunch  
Now my empty cup tastes as sweet as the punch*

At the time The Association's "Mary" was a hit (summer 1966), I was unsure of a course of action in life, as a student at Iowa State University. I hear one commentary about the

song's being about a person who is lonely, then along comes Mary to set things right. Admittedly, the Association ran the words of "Mary" together at times, so I did not know at the time what the song was intended to mean. Besides "Mary", there were other records that I remember "Sweet Pea", "Wild Thing", "Lil' Red Riding Hood", "Popsicle", "Sunny", "Strangers in the Night", "Red Rubber Ball" – and many others.

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"In explaining to Gulf War veterans why he chose not to pursue the war further, President Bush said, 'Whose life would be on my hands as the commander-in-chief because I, unilaterally, went beyond the international law, went beyond the stated mission, and said we're going to show our macho? We're going into Baghdad. We're going to be an occupying power – America in an Arab land – with no allies at our side. It would have been disastrous'."

"I see what you mean."

"So you don't give any credence to the idea that Jr. was cleaning up after Daddy?"

"I've said it a few times in my stories, but I don't really believe it. If anything, I believe that he was trying to show the country that he was as decisive as his father. Let's face it Gunny, we had plenty of chances to take bin Laden out before 9/11."

"You sure have equipped this place of yours nicely."

"As soon as we get the propane tank in for Derek and I do a couple of things with the shelter, we'll be ready. I want a compact washer and dryer so we can keep clean if we have to use it."

"Did Derek's house come furnished?"

"About half furnished, I'd say. It was stripped of personal possessions but it had the optional TV, a washer and dryer, refrigerator and freezer. I'd say he got a pretty good deal for 50 grand."

"He's hooked into the wind turbines?"

"Yes but he only has a small inverter. He'll need to buy 2 more to get him to 10kw and I think it would be cheaper for him to buy the same 12kw unit I have."

"Why didn't he?"

"Money. I'm saving and at the rate I'm going, I can buy him one real soon and swap it for the 3,600 watt unit he bought."

"What will you do with it?"

"Oh, probably put it in the well house and run the well pump off it. It will handle the surge from when the pump kicks in. I may put in a couple of batteries for backup."

"That ought to work."

"You know Gunny, there's only one thing that I'm afraid of."

"What might that be?"

"That some jerk will come along, snap his fingers and wake me up from this dream I'm having."

"You think this is all a dream?"

"A good one too, I haven't cheated on my wife, have a big gun collection, a shelter, my son's here and I don't live in ERK anymore."

"ERK?"

"California."

"Bad out there?"

"Every neighborhood has its own gang population. My pal Ronald took off and moved to New Mexico to be near his brother and my other pal, Clarence just sort of disappeared. Of course, I didn't get to meetings, so I wouldn't have seen him."

"Meetings? Do you belong to a club?"

"In a way, Alcoholics Anonymous."

"You don't drink?"

"Not any more. Why do you think a 64-year-old man has the body of an 80-year-old? You have your fun, but you pay for it twice, once when you do it and later when all of your sins catch up to you."

"You seem healthy enough."

"Thank you kind sir. Better yet, thank Humana that I can afford the drugs I need to keep going."

"Do you take a lot?"

"Not really, but the ones I take are very expensive."

"How expensive?"

"About \$1,000 a month at retail. They cost me \$250 a month until I get to a certain level and then begin to get cheaper. Eventually, they'll only cost me \$50 or \$100 a month."

"What are they, gold plated?"

"No, but they're the latest miracle drug for my conditions. Because the patents are still in force, most of them retail for \$5 per."

"Remind me not to get old."

"Gunny, you watch what you drink and you may never need the pills. No matter how hard you try, you can't drink more than they can make."

"What did you like to drink, Tom?"

"Chivas Regal, Gentleman Jack, Bombay Sapphire Gin and Jose Cuervo 1800 Tequila. For beer I drank Coors and Carlings Black Label when I could find it."

"That's all top drawer stuff."

"I didn't say I was a cheap drunk, just a drunk."

"And you chain smoke on top of it?"

"Not really, I light each cigarette separately. I suppose I smoke about 2 packs a day."

"All expensive, bad habits."

"Smoking is cheaper than drinking and doesn't leave you with a hangover."

"Yeah, just coughing and wheezing."

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Did you ever watch them drive on I-40? In Arizona, I think the average speed was ~75 and in New Mexico ~80. You get used to the sound and after a while the only thing you notice is the screech of tires. Although this wasn't a prime wind area, there was just enough to keep the turbines running 95% of the time and keep all of the batteries charged. Derek and I ran the gas pipe that would link our two tanks together. When he put in his tank the first week of June I had mine topped off, keeping us even at 2,700 gallons each.

In this case it was my daughter-in-law and the two kids. Derek was settled in his new job and she put in an application for a job with the Winslow Schools as a bus driver. I had high hopes things would settle down and we could get back to enjoying our retirement. Frank Sinatra had High Hopes too (*A Hole in the Head* 1959), but I believe I used those lyrics in another story. Me like movies and music? Where on earth did you ever get that idea? (It's cheap entertainment)

I also had one small problem with that wheelchair. The wheels were so small it tended to bog down in the sand. The wheelchair could go 5mph on high and I could walk about 2mph with frequent breaks to catch my breath. I settled on a Polaris Trail Boss 330 to get around with, it was the perfect vehicle for an old fart. Now I could ride my string line when I got tired of typing.

We discussed fencing the property but that was a whole of fence posts and wire. As it was, Derek was making double payments on his home in hopes of having it paid off in 7 years. That left them a little tight on money, but they were used to that by now. At least he had health insurance and all the other benefits that go with state employment.

When Chris had fashioned the rifle rack for the back of the wheelchair, it was bolted on as opposed to being welded on. Gunny and Derek helped me move it from my wheelchair to my new Polaris. Does it seem like Gunny was there a lot? Well, his was single and spent most of his weekends at our place. We'd do a few chores I couldn't handle and a little shooting. I was paying for the ammo, but he was taking the brass because he knew someone who could reload them. After a while, he was shooting only his reloads.

Al was maybe 37-38, divorced, and had taken a liking to the beer I kept in the refrigerator for him. I was still working on getting Damon to come to Arizona, but hadn't made any progress. I won't say it doesn't bother me to have beer in the refrigerator, but I'd drink Coke C2 instead. I also had a couple of bottles each of the booze I listed earlier but the seals were intact on those. (Of course they took C2 off the market!)

We got the washer and dryer for the shelter from Sears. It was a Kenmore white-on-white 24" space saver. I got it based on the size, not the capacity. We were down to ordering food from Walton Feed and maybe buying some replacement ammo. The laundry in the house was the Maytag front loading models Sharon had always wanted.

With Derek out of the house, the expense for phone and phone went way down and I began contemplating ordering from Walton Feed. Sharon and I discussed this and decided to buy 3 1-year supplies at a time. It would come to about \$3,000 including shipping. With the things we already had, ie, coffee, toilet paper and medicines, we were good to go. In order to get some of the meds we need, we'd immediately found a doctor and got prescriptions for the drugs we took. The second set of prescriptions was for a 90-day supply of each drug with 3 refills. In the 10 months we had been here we'd managed to fill them 3 times giving us a 9-month back up supply of drugs. I didn't relish

those trips to the pharmacy; they were very, very expensive. As soon as we had that 3<sup>rd</sup> refill, we'd switch to buying food.

Preparation is 1) never easy; and 2) extremely expensive, especially when it came to getting a year up on prescriptions. In terms of when TSHTF, I was thinking 2008 when Beijing had the Olympic Games. I was guessing at both what and when, but the right one, H5N1, didn't get us so the left one, China, would. Or maybe it would be terrorists after we left Iraq and Afghanistan.

◦

I was born in 1943. We had WW II, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, Desert Storm, Somalia, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, a total of 9 wars or actions in my 64 years. This didn't include WTC '93, Oklahoma City '95 or the WTC/Pentagon in '01. Neither did it include Ruby Ridge, Wounded Knee, the Montana Freeman or Waco. *Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't after you.* No doubt I missed a few too. I didn't mention the Marine Corps Barracks, USS Pueblo, SS Mayagüez incidents or the Iran Hostage Crisis.

It hasn't been peaceful for a very long time. Iran and North Korea are pursuing nuclear weapons and China really wants Taiwan. It was bad enough when 5 nations had those weapons and now there are 10. My two most likely candidates for trouble are terrorists and China. Everyone who bothers to prepare has to put up with all of the scofflaws who think you're crazy. They look at your old high mileage junker and ask why you don't have a better car or live in a real home instead of a trailer. We ought to just let the media appoint our politicians for us instead of holding elections. Disillusioned? Yes, and then some. Frightened? Not at all, it's just a storm shelter in a place that doesn't get many storms. The name I gave to my new ATV? Salina.

Derek continued to buy batteries until he too had 12. His garden did well considering and we even found Gayle's recipe for bread and butter pickles. We canned green beans, homemade spaghetti sauce and pickles plus put up a ton of potatoes and 100 pounds of onions. We stored the spuds and onions in the shelter due to the temperature, where the carrots went into a box of sand.

Before the end of the year, we bought a full Black Angus steer, had it butchered and divided it with Derek. This time the 20.3ft<sup>3</sup> upright freezer we bought from Sears was frost free. I also bought a case of boneless pork loins and spent an afternoon cutting 1" thick pork chops. When we cook them they're easy to butterfly. We had our final prescriptions and our first supply of food from Idaho.

◦

I finally got Damon to come down for Thanksgiving of 2007. I mailed him an airline ticket so he could fly from Des Moines to Flagstaff. It was one of those budget tickets that you can't change so I knew exactly how long he would be here.

"Did you ever finish posting *In Harm's Way* on Frugal's?"

"Well, my computer..."

"Yes or no?"

"No. Why did you leave California?"

"I have wanted to move to Arizona since 1992. We finally took a chance, put the house on the market and here we are."

"I don't suppose you have a beer?"

"There's a six-pack in the refrigerator."

"Want one?"

"Bring me a C2."

"Did you buy Derek his house?"

"Sharon and I loaned him the down payment. When you make up your mind to move here, we'll do the same for you."

"Pretty fancy house."

"It's a repo. Look, you're free to live anywhere you want and do whatever suits you. I have my preferences and there are bonuses attached. For example, should you decide to live here, we'll loan you \$10,000 for a down payment and you'll have free electricity and water. Derek's payments are under \$300 a month, what do you pay for rent?"

"\$300, how much are the payments to pay you back?"

"At the moment, nothing."

I didn't tell him that despite our having spent all that money on drugs and the food from Idaho, Sharon and I had \$10,000 set aside in case he decided to take me up on the offer. Most of the things we'd spent money on were classified as *just in case stuff*. There was no way we'd ever fit a 10-year supply of food into the shelter, that would require 330ft<sup>3</sup>. We need a building for a well house so we'd had it built extra big, on the order of 12'x24'. It was our out building we used to store nearly everything.

There was Costco Store in Prescott. It made for a day-long trip, but we were just sitting around growing old anyway. We'd borrow Mary's pickup for those shopping trips, toilet



paper is very bulky. We'd always sigh when we drove through Sedona. It wasn't meant to be. We stopped once and I got myself a serape, I'm a big fan of Clint Eastwood.

I reminded Damon that his kids would soon be grown and Britney would probably make him a grandpa. His youngest was 12 and Britney was 16 now. Aaron was 14 and, according to Damon, hell on wheels. I also pointed out that Carrie's new husband would probably help him move, just to get him out of Britt. I also noticed he slept a lot, probably the meds he was on. I had a lot of odds and ends. For example, I ordered a full case of Marsh Wheeling cigars. They went with the serape and my grimy old straw hat.

o

Damon said he'd think about it, but if I found a good used mobile home, send him an email. Not my job to find him a home, I didn't bother. If'n he wants to be sitting in Britt when the bombs start to fall, so be it.

Derek and Mary were both tall and Elizabeth took after her parents. At 7 years old, she could almost look me in the eye. I had noticed that Derek was the quiet type; he seemed to prefer to keep things to himself. The only thing my two boys had in common were their parents, we could have named them Day and Night.

The race was on, and I wondered who would win. Would we get the food purchased from Walton Feed before TSHTF or not? \$64 question. I didn't bother to read the papers or watch the news anymore, it was too depressing. Derek would mention anything that merited attention. To be 80% truthful, I felt like I was at Disneyland, locked away in Fantasyland and that at any moment, I'd wake up from this dream.

Before we left ERK, I talked Dr. J into updating all of our immunizations and we're set unless there's a smallpox epidemic. There were places you could go to get the shots and I talked myself blue before he wrote the Rx so we could get them. Sharon refused to take that smallpox vaccine, but I should be good until I die.

Saw a rattlesnake today. I took a picture and compared it. It was a prairie rattlesnake and the first one I'd see here. I went through all the Arizona snakes just to see what liked this area. It seemed that only the prairie rattlesnake like to call Coconino County home. That wasn't gospel; it would be just my luck to get bit on the backside by a Mojave Green. I'd probably be too embarrassed to get treatment.

The dealer put in a 500 gallon gas tank today. You know the kind that is up on stilts. Derek bought one of those case hardened chains with a padlock to prevent anyone from stealing gas from us. Lucky us, Sharon and I got to pay for the tank and the first fill. The gas wasn't all that much cheaper than in ERK.

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"Dad, this is Derek, did you see the news?"

"Naw, I wait for you to tell me. What's up?"

"Bush dispatched 3 CSGs to Taiwan."

"He can't do that."

"Why not?"

"I haven't bought all of the food yet."

"You had better hurry; it will only take them about a week or so to travel the distance."

"There is no way we can do it in that short of a time. We'll have to rent a U-Haul truck and pick the food up; can you get some time off to do that?"

"I suppose."

"I'll call them and find out when they can have the order ready. I'll use the money we set aside for Damon's house to buy the food and you will just have to go get it. We'll send a cashier's check. I can print you a map from Map Blast to help you find the place. It's about 750 miles north of here."

The only downsides to picking the order up were we'd have to pay the Idaho sales tax and rent the truck. Derek said it would be faster and cheaper to take Mary's pickup and just rent a U-Haul trailer. Faster was good, cheaper was even better. It would take Walton 3 days to get the order ready. He was to stop in the store and pay for it and then pick it up at their warehouse. I told him to buy a grain mill and anything else he thought we might need.

I started to check our supplies of ammo. We couldn't fight a war, but we had enough to keep the bad guys away. I called Damon, but he didn't answer his phone. I checked and we had 24 bundles of toilet paper at 30 rolls per but only 36 cans of coffee.

"We need to go to Costco. I figure 12 more bundles of toilet paper, 36 cans of coffee and a bunch more batteries. Do you think I could get them to put in a propane tank for Damon's house?"

"Gary, all I can do is call and ask. Why the sudden rush to stock up?"

"Derek said they sent the Nimitz, Stennis and Reagan CSGs to Taiwan. The Kitty Hawk is sailing out of Yokosuka to join them. He's not leaving for Idaho for a day or so and we can use Mary's pickup."

"I'd better call Amy and Lorrie."

"Call Lorrie, she'll know where Amy is."

We hadn't added the extra pair of bunk beds because Damon hadn't moved here. We had accommodations to sleep 10 people. Sharon said we were in luck; they could deliver the propane tank tomorrow, but wondered if we had enough cash to pay for the fuel. I told her there was \$2,500 left from the 10 grand we'd set aside for Damon. She said we had 4 grand in the bank. The answer was yes; we could top off our two tanks and pay to fill the third one. We'd run the pipe early, figuring Damon would say yes. It would be simply a matter of hooking the tank into the pipe and opening the valve. That would give us a total of 8,100-gallons of propane and 24 batteries backing up the wind turbines.

The two nearest possible targets were Flagstaff and Holbrook, putting us in the eye of the needle. If it looked like a strike was imminent, we could lower the radio antenna and lock down the wind turbines. We'd have more than an hour after any strike to put them back to their operational mode.

Costco was experiencing a run at both stores and limiting. We got 12 cans of coffee and 6 packages of toilet paper. I bought more cigarettes while we were at it. Then we went back in and did it all over again, there is more than one way to skin a cat. Then we hit the other store in Prescott and did it over again. We ended up with everything on our list and a few things besides. Of course, if China doesn't strike, we won't need to go to Prescott for the next year.

When I got home, the announcer was saying that Bush ordered all of our troops out of the Middle East. I took that as a very bad sign. Ships had already been dispatched to pick up the equipment, 2 weeks before, a very bad sign indeed. Derek hadn't said why the Prez had sent the CSGs. The announcer said that the rocket attacks on Taiwan were continuing; that explained that.

Costco had all their Christmas stuff out too. Yeah right, it was going to be a very, merry Christmas. Sharon had called Lorrie again and Amy was living in Phoenix. She was on her way with her two and Lorrie was on her way with their 4 (1 was in the service) and David's spare girlfriend. Jesus H. Christ!

Sharon gave them directions. Take exit 245 north and look for 2 doublewides and 100 wind turbines. Good directions, unfortunately. I had Derek put my guns and ammo in the shelter and my ATV in the shed after he unloaded Mary's pickup. I also had him empty the spuds and onions from the shelter. Sharon was busy working on a quilt and I got her keys and drove the Daewoo into town and filled up the tank. I can still drive; I just don't have a license. Don't need one because I don't take the ATV off the property. We also called in refills on our prescriptions.

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 6

*On a dark desert highway  
Cool wind in my hair  
The warm smell of colitas  
Rising up through the air  
Up ahead in the distance  
I saw a shimmering light  
My head grew heavy and my sight grew dim  
I had to stop for the night*

*There she stood in the doorway  
I heard the mission bell  
And I was thinking to myself  
This could be heaven or this could be hell  
Then she lit up a candle  
And she showed me the way  
There were voices down the corridor  
I thought I heard them say*

*Welcome to the Hotel California  
Such a lovely place, such a lovely face  
There's plenty of room at the Hotel California  
Any time of year, you can find it here*

*Her mind is definitely twisted  
She's got her Mercedes Benz  
She's got a lotta pretty, pretty boys  
That she calls friends  
How they dance in the courtyard  
Sweet summer sweat  
Some dance to remember  
Some dance to forget*

*So I called up the captain  
Please bring me my wine  
He said "We haven't had that spirit here since 1969"  
And still those voices they're calling from far away  
Wake you up in the middle of the night  
Just to hear them say*

*Welcome to the Hotel California  
Such a lovely place, such a lovely face  
They're livin' it up at the Hotel California  
What a nice surprise, bring your alibis*

*Mirrors on the ceiling, the pink Champaign on ice  
And she said "We are all just prisoners here of our own device"  
In the masters chambers they're gathered for the feast  
They stab it with their steely knives but they just can't kill the beast*

*Last thing I remember, I was runnin' for the door  
I had to find the passage back to the place I was before  
"Good night" said the night man "We are programmed to receive  
You can check out anytime you like, but you can never leave"*

Wannta bet? I would have to admit, there was more truth to that song than I would have liked. Went there in '82 to escape Iowa. Stopped working for Iowa in '92, but it took us until '06 to get the hell out of California. If they hadn't passed all of those stupid gun laws, we'd probably still be there. If this is all a dream, don't ever let me wake up.

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"Yesterday Geraldo Rivera was again asked to leave Iraq for giving away sensitive information. ... Afterwards, Geraldo said I've never been so ashamed and I'm Geraldo." – Conan O'Brien

"It's been reported that the Pentagon is trying to kick Geraldo Rivera out of Iraq because he revealed sensitive military information. Yeah, if Geraldo is kicked out this means that Saddam Hussein will once again be the most hated man in Iraq." – Conan O'Brien

"Playboy magazine announced that they are going to support the troops by sending them emails from Playboy playmates. After hearing this, the US troops said 'Just our luck, we get emails from playmates, but we're embedded with Geraldo.'" – Conan O'Brien

"The Pentagon announced a policy change. They said that if there is a war with Iraq, they will give the media total access. They're going to let them come along, be there on the front lines. It's called Operation Goodbye Geraldo." – Jay Leno

"Roger Ailes, the head of the Fox News Channel, is denying reports that he sent President Bush a letter giving him advice on the war. In his own defense Ailes said 'I'm not in a position to give anyone advice, I hired Geraldo'." – Conan O'Brien

"I never give my opinion on political matters, but before we bomb Iraq, let's wait two weeks until Geraldo is over there." – Craig Kilborn

"Geraldo has returned to the states. See? I told you airline security was a joke." – Jay Leno

"Even though bin Laden is said to have fled to Pakistan more than a week ago, US officials said they will continue to bomb Afghanistan as long as Geraldo is there." – Jay Leno

"According to the New York Daily News, Geraldo said he is now carrying a gun, and he will personally shoot Osama bin Laden if he finds him. If Osama also has a gun, this could work out okay." – Jay Leno

"This week the Fox News Channel found out that a man that they had repeatedly interviewed lied about being a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army and he wasn't a real Colonel at all. Yeah, and they had been interviewing this guy for months. After hearing the news a spokesperson for FOX said, 'Big deal, Geraldo is not a real reporter.'" –Conan O'Brien

There were Sharon and me, 2. There were Derek, Mary, Elizabeth and Joshua, 4. There was Gunny, 1. There were Amy, Audrey and Udell, 3. There were David, Lorrie, his 4 boys, Jeffrey and Maria, 8. There was, of all people, Damon that was 1. Total = 19 and if an attack comes, there are going to be a whole lot of people sleeping on the floor. Tough chit, be damned grateful. And, no, Sharon's chair won't fit, take a sleeping pill, I've got 1,800. We should have bought some paper plates and plastic silverware. Oh, well... The good news? Damon brought his shotgun and can ride with Derek to Idaho.

The bad/good news? Those carriers go faster than advertised, but the other ships can't all keep up with them so they have to slow down. Look at the sky, we might get lucky and the rock will come out from behind the sun.

There were no embedded reporters on this trip. That was a real shame, if they had known which of our ships was going to get sunk, they could have assigned Geraldo. It's pretty hard to draw maps in water. It must be said that since he stuck his foot into his mouth all the way to his crotch, he's cleaned up his act, a little.

If a CSG can maintain headway of 20 knots, they can cover 480 nautical miles a day. The distance from San Diego to Taipei is 5986 nautical miles. Steaming time at 20 knots is ~300 hours or 12½ days.

It is important to note that there really is no real definition of a strike group. Strike groups are formed and disestablished on an as needed basis, and one may be different from another. However, they all are comprised of similar types of ships. Typically a carrier strike group might have:

- a carrier – The carrier provides a wide range of options to the US government from simply showing the flag to attacks on airborne, afloat and ashore targets. Because carriers operate in international waters, its aircraft do not need to secure landing rights on foreign soil. These ships also engage in sustained operations in support of other forces.
- two guided missile cruisers – multi-mission surface combatants. Equipped with Tomahawks for long-range strike capability.

- a guided missile destroyer – multi-mission surface combatant, used primarily for anti-air warfare (AAW)
- a destroyer – primarily for anti-submarine warfare (ASW)
- a frigate – primarily for anti-submarine warfare (ASW)
- two attack submarines – in a direct support role seeking out and destroying hostile surface ships and submarines
- a combined ammunition, oiler, and supply ship – provides logistic support enabling the Navy's forward presence: on station, ready to respond

The slowest ship would probably be the oiler. The new class of oilers is capable of 25 knots. With that in mind, one could cut the sailing time to 12 days, not a significant improvement; which probably explains why we always have some of our CSGs closer to SE Asia. At any given time, I'd speculate that we have ~3 CSGs within 3-4 days sailing time.

The only way to know where the carriers are at any given time is to check the websites for the individual carriers and hope they're up-to-date. Global Security is more than a year out of date and FAS about 5 years. However, if it is a classified movement, watch CNN or CBS. If anyone is going to report the movement, it will be the Communist News Network or Communist Broadcasting System.

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Who would be stupid enough to go to Taiwan and wait to see if the carriers would show up? CNN and CBS come to mind. And then, not to be outdone, ABC, NBC and FOX News would follow. The speculation is running rampant and our carriers haven't even cleared Hawaii, yet.

WASHINGTON, June 2 (UPI) – The rise of China affects virtually every other country in the world, but most especially those that neighbor it. Moscow has important reasons to be concerned about China: Russian territory bordering it is sparsely populated.

Furthermore, large numbers of Chinese citizens have been crossing the border to settle in Siberia – something that many Russians in the region have become nervous about. Siberia also possesses petroleum and other natural resources that a rapidly modernizing China increasingly wants access to.

In the past, Beijing has asserted territorial claims to a significant portion of Siberia. Almost all of these claims have been settled, but if a more powerful China ever in the future decided to revive its claim to any of this territory, Russia would face an extremely difficult challenge. The Chinese military appears to be undergoing modernization at a far

more rapid rate than the Russian one – in part because China is the largest customer for Russian weaponry. As time goes on, the Russian-Chinese conventional force balance is steadily shifting in Beijing's favor.

Russia, of course, continues to possess a large nuclear arsenal – as does China. But would the Kremlin really be willing to risk Moscow in order to save Vladivostok or any other Russian city near the Sino-Russian border? The answer to this question may not be clear to the Kremlin even now, much less in the future when China has become more powerful.

The Chinese challenge to Russia, of course, has not reached this point by any means. Many Russian observers, though, have expressed fear about China's future intentions toward Russia. Yet China and Russia also have several important common interests, including opposition to American "hegemony," democratization, and Sunni fundamentalism. They also have a growing trade relationship that is important to both.

Moscow's response to the Chinese challenge has so far involved a mixture of band wagoning with it and balancing against it. On the one hand, Moscow band wagoned with China through signing a Treaty of Friendship with Beijing in 2001, working with China through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to reduce America's post-9/11 presence in Central Asia, and participating in joint military exercises that were widely seen to have both anti-Taiwanese and anti-American overtones. On the other hand, Moscow has balanced against China through repeatedly calling for a strategic partnership with India as well as China (despite the important differences between these two), and selling more advanced weapons to India than to China.

The Putin administration's conflicted policy toward China can best be seen by comparing its arms export and petroleum export policies toward it. China is the biggest customer for Russian weapons. Indeed, the Russian arms industry needs China as a customer in order to prosper since the Russian military cannot afford enough weapons in order for it to do so. By contrast, the Putin administration has been hesitant about building an oil pipeline from Siberia to China for fear of becoming too dependent on China as a customer. The result is that Moscow is providing Beijing with the means (i.e., arms) to threaten Russia while also giving it some incentive to do so by denying Beijing as much Siberian oil as China wishes to buy.

Fortunately for Moscow, Beijing is preoccupied with Taiwan, the US, Japan, and even domestic unrest. But if China ever decided to take measures that Russia found threatening, Moscow could find fending it off to be extremely difficult – if not impossible.

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Even if China had understated her nuclear arsenal by 90%, she couldn't successfully take on both the US and Russia at the same time. The first round of incoming warheads would be intended to interrupt C<sup>3</sup>I. That went for everyone; you always start by decapitating the enemy.



"Where are you going?"

"Out, I don't know where, just out."

"Take a portable radio."

"I didn't buy any. There are too many people in here, I can't hear myself think. I think I'll go check the sting fence and harass a rattlesnake."

Derek, Mary, and their two kids plus Damon were at his house. Everyone else was at our house and all of them were trying to talk at the same time.

"Hold on Tom, I'll go with you. I heard you say you didn't have any portable radios."

"Believe it or not, I forgot to buy some. Can I get any in Winslow?"

"I'm not sure; you'd probably have to go to Flagstaff."

"What time is it?"

"1330."

"Feel like going now?"

"Why not."

"Sharon, Gunny and I are going to Flagstaff. We'll be back before supper."

"What do you need?"

"Portable radios."

"What kind?"

"Whatever I can find that's cheap."

"Where?"

"Radio Shack. I'll need the ATM card and the checkbook."

The fella at Radio Shack told me I'd need a license for the GRMS but not for FRS. I said screw it and bought CB radios. You don't need a license for them, thank you Mrs. Carter or was that Betty Ford? It took longer to get there than it did to buy the radios. I only bought 10 Midland® 75-822 Mini 40-Channel CB Radio w/ Weather/All-Hazard portables and 3 Cobra 148 GTL AM/Single Sideband CB mobiles plus the mobile antennas.

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Going and returning, we had a chance to visit.

"When is Derek leaving for Idaho?"

"Tonight. They'll leave around 8 and get there tomorrow morning. They should be back tomorrow night around midnight."

"If they're driving you crazy now, how are you going to be able to stay in the shelter?"

"Xanax, I knew it would come in handy for something."

"Do you really think we're going to have a war?"

"It's not if, it's when and what."

"You didn't know your daughter was in Phoenix?"

"We left her in Palmdale. I guess it means that you can run, but you can't hide."

"Sure. You never said what branch of service you were in."

"Air Force, '61-'65."

"Where were you stationed?"

"Edwards Air Force Base."

"I've been through this before you know, back in '62. Those were the longest 2 weeks of my life. We went to work just like any other day. Later that morning they told us there would be a radio broadcast in 45 minutes that we all had to listen to. When we got back to the main base that night, there were 12 bombers sitting at the end of the runway loaded and ready to leave for Cuba."

"Were you scared?"

"Pettrified. I have the feeling that this time it may not work out. It will depend on whether China chooses to blink. By all logic, they should, they can't possibly win and if Russia joins us in this, they could step down. Did you hear anything about why they may have attacked Taiwan?"

"Yes, the Congress over there or whatever it's called voted for independence."

"I think they were undergoing some sort of change over there, eliminating the National Assembly or something. That would have given them only one division in their legislative branch. It's in the CIA World Fact book. Both Bush and Japan have been trying to get them to hold off from declaring independence. The PRC has a law prohibiting from claiming independence, saying they would use military force to prevent it. Both Japan and we resumed military relations with Taiwan a couple of years ago. If that's what's behind this, we may not support them."

"We may have to if we have any citizens there that the Chinese won't allow leaving."

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There was a lot going on behind the scenes that didn't make the news or wasn't well reported. Air Force One flew to Moscow, I can tell you that much. The question of Iran's uranium enrichment program had never been resolved. Iraq was turning into a civil war as our troops began pulling out.

Daytime highs were barely above freezing and the nights were very cold. I don't know what time my boys got in, the pickup and trailer were parked by the shed when I got up. The kids hung around for 4 or 5 days waiting, worrying and just plain hoping this would all blow over. Finally David said he had to get back to California. Sharon persuaded Lorie and Jeffrey to stay. Amy said she couldn't afford to miss any more school and would go back to Phoenix, but would watch the news closely and come back if it sounded bad. I got out an Arizona map and used a highlighter to mark the route she should take if she had to come back. Damon stayed on with us and Derek returned to work. After they left, I hired a woman to come in and clean up the house, it was a mess.

At least the well house was filling up, but looking it over I remembered what we forgot. We need 40 gallons of vegetable oil plus sugar. The folks at Walton feed said each one year supply of food needed 4 gallons of oil and that they didn't include sugar. What the hell, we could stock up on more toilet paper and cigarettes too. Sharon said good oil ran \$8 a gallon, the TP was \$11 a bundle and the kids had gone through several cans of coffee. She also said that the way Amy went through sugar, we better buy 200 pounds.

How long did it take to get your wife aboard your preparedness program? I'm not sure here, but I think I've finally succeeded. Derek had picked up the mill, oxygen removers and several of the empty 6 gallon pails with lids in Idaho. Mylar bags and a sealer were another add-on. We ended up with 4 pails of sugar, 12 cans of coffee, 6 packages of TP, 10 large cans of Crisco and 40 gallons of oil, but didn't have enough money for more smokes. That irked me; I only had 22½ cartons left.

Sharon would only let me smoke in one room of the house, my bedroom, which doubled these days as my office. What's more, she'd only let me smoke my cigars outside. I needed to put a heater in the well house. Then, I could warm the place up, get on my Polaris ATV, light a cigar and say, "gitty-up Salina". Of course it's silly, but this was one horse that wouldn't run away with me.

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The TV didn't say what happened, but it turned out to be Dick Cheney and Condie Rice on Air Force One. I could only speculate that Putin and they made China an offer they couldn't refuse. The carrier strike groups held off ~ 200 miles from Taiwan where they were joined by Russian ships, guided missile destroyers.

Lorrie didn't seem to be in any hurry to return to Palmdale. We had long suspected that David and she weren't getting along that well. That only left us Amy to worry about and Phoenix was plenty close enough. Lorrie told Sharon that there wasn't anything in Palmdale she wanted to go back to.

Just after the first of the year (2008), Sharon got the call that Charlene had died. She told me she'd drive to California City and meet Shirley; that I'd better stay home and take care of the pets. It wasn't an even deal; Missy didn't like me giving her the insulin shots.

Given the criteria that USS used to describe possible nuclear targets, Palmdale was high on the list. The Air Force built all of the really neat stuff at Plant 42 (PMD) and it had very good runways: Runway 7/25 – 12002 x 150 ft. / 3658 x 46 m; Runway 4/22 – 12001 x 150 ft. / 3658 x 46 m; Runway 72/252 – 6000 x 100 ft. / 1829 x 30 m – Runway used as a military assault strip.

Winslow had an airport too: INW, Runway 4/22 – 7499 x 150 ft. / 2286 x 46 m; Runway 11/29 – 7100 x 150 ft. / 2164 x 46 m; Runway 11/29 – 7100 x 150 ft. / 2164 x 46 m. If an attack came, they couldn't nuke every runway in the US, regardless of what anyone says. Winslow didn't have much else to offer, but the airport did have Jet Fuel A. Those were short runways, about all you could land there was a C-17 or C-130 and choppers. Aircraft operations average 53/day: 77% transient general aviation; 21% local general aviation; and, 2% military.

Using Hotel California as a metaphor for the nation, Eagles touched on many themes, including innocence (and the loss thereof), the dangers, temptations, and transient nature of fame, shallow relationships, divorce and loss of love, the end results of manifest destiny, and the "American Dream". Members of Eagles have described the album as a metaphor for the perceived decline of America into materialism and decadence. So, one might say that the Eagles describe the *Fall and Decline of the American Empire* in Hotel California.

The Monroe Doctrine is a principle of American foreign policy enunciated in President James Monroe's message to Congress, Dec. 2, 1823. It initially called for an end to European intervention in the Americas, but it was later extended to justify US imperialism in the Western Hemisphere and later the entire world. Don't mistake my sense of realism with my patriotism, where is it written that one can't be a realistic patriot? One of these days, America is going to bite off too big of a chew.

The Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny were closely related ideas: historian Walter McDougall calls Manifest Destiny a corollary of the Monroe Doctrine, because while the Monroe Doctrine did not specify expansion, expansion was necessary in order to enforce the Doctrine. Concerns in the United States that European powers (especially Great Britain) were seeking to acquire colonies or greater influence in North America led to calls for expansion in order to prevent this. In his influential 1935 study of Manifest Destiny, Albert Weinberg wrote that "the expansionism of the [1830s] arose as a defensive effort to forestall the encroachment of Europe in North America."

"Damon, have you decided whether or not you're going to stay on permanently?"

"Gee, no, I haven't why?"

"We spent every penny of the money we had set aside to give you a down payment on a home."

"I do miss the kids, but until we know which way this situation is going to go down, I'd rather stay here."

"Ok, I guess Sharon and I had better start saving you a down payment. Don't look for a house until we have the funds, though."

"How long will that take?"

"Maybe 4-5 months, I can't say for sure."

"Can I do anything to help out?"

"Yes, save your checks. What did you do with your stuff up in Britt?"

"I just split; it's still in the little house. My payee is paying the bills while I'm gone."

"You'd better decide what you're going to do and either close up the house or go home."

"I think I'll just go home and then decide."

"Just go home and pick up your stuff. Bring it back here and we'll figure something out. This thing isn't over; it's just in a lull."

"Could I borrow some money?"

"I have \$300, will that do?"

"It will buy the gas."

"Take some MREs with you."

"Yuck."

"How much gas can that Honda you borrowed take? Just for once in your life, take some direction. Go home. Get your stuff. Come back here. Leave the shotgun here"

## **Fort Navajo – Chapter 7**

*Used to chase that boy home from school  
We called him frekled-faced, red-headed fool  
He was different...he wasn't cool like me  
Sticks and stones didn't break any bones  
But we never left well enough alone  
And one day he ran away from home, you see  
And I passed him as he walked away  
And in his eyes I heard him say*

*One of these days you're gonna love me  
You'll sit down by yourself and think  
About the times you pushed and shoved me  
And what good friends we might've been  
And then you're gonna sigh a little  
Maybe even cry a little but  
One of these days you're gonna love me*

*Patty Sue was a small town beauty  
I took one look at her and had to pull her to me  
Lord knows she should've seen right through me  
When I promised her the world  
But at 17, you only want one thing  
I left her standin' with my high school ring  
Innocent tears in the pourin' rain*

*As I walked away  
And I still see her in my dreams  
And to this day she's whispering*

*One of these days you're gonna love me  
You'll sit down by yourself and think  
About the time you turned from me  
And what good friends we might've been  
And then you're gonna sigh a little  
Maybe even cry a little but  
One of these days you're gonna love me*

*Now everybody stands up  
The congregation sings  
It's a song of sweet forgiveness  
And as the chorus rings  
The wind blows clear my memory  
The pages start to turn  
Then suddenly I'm singin'  
The moment that I learn*

*One of these days I'm gonna love me  
And feel the joy of sweet release  
One of these days, I'll rise above me  
And at last I'll find some peace  
Then I'm gonna smile a little  
Maybe even laugh a little but  
One of these days I'm gonna love me*

That was Tim McGraw, not the Eagles. I like him too and was a bit envious. He married Faith Hill. There was one song she recorded I used to like too, maybe I'll share it later.

o

I had other problems. That StarDuster was near the top of a 75' tower. Under federal law, for CB, you must use an FCC certified transmitter. No modifications are allowed to your equipment. Equipment output power is limited to 4 watts for AM transmitters and 12 watts PEP (peak envelope power) for single sideband (SSB) transmitters. There are no restrictions on size or type of antennas, except the antenna must not be more than 20 feet above the highest point of the structure it is mounted to and may not be more than 60 feet above the ground. It wasn't when the tower was down. The linear amplifier I had was only a small amplifier and it was legally modified to 10-meters but worked well on 11 meters, not that I would do such a thing. There are the radio police, you know.

I figured that if Damon left his shotgun here, I could expect to see him back. If Lorrie was staying, she'd need a place, too. Maybe we could kill 2 birds with 1 stone and buy a home Lorrie and Damon could share. I had in mind a modest, 3-bedroom home. Between his disability and her SSI, they could get by very good and they could tolerate each other although there wasn't any love lost there.

Sharon got back before Damon did and we discussed my proposal. She could see the possibilities but said that she thought I'd lost my mind. She agreed with my assessment that it would take 4-5 months to have a down payment. I asked if she really wanted either of the kids living with us on a permanent basis. That settled that, she would discuss it with Lorrie and I would discuss it with Damon. Do you have any idea how quiet a house can be when it's just you and the wife? You can almost hear the electric clocks tick.

Things quieted down and I wondered if this was the lull before the storm. What was the sense of being prepared if nothing happened? What would happen if we weren't?

By the middle of February, we had managed to talk Lorrie and Damon into the arrangement. The CSGs had sailed back to San Diego or to other assignments and I began to bemoan the fact that we had all of that food in the well house that we might never eat. I had managed to cut back on my smoking to a pack a day, but was careful not to let Sharon know. That way, she'd still buy 6 cartons a month. We went into Winslow for our annual doctor's visit, got checked over and issued new prescriptions. We also saw the dentist and had any damaged teeth fixed.

I sent Dr. J an email and told him I was doing just fine and wondered if he would consider writing new prescriptions without seeing us. About a week later, they came in the mail. He didn't send an Rx for Vicodin ES, but we were still working on the bottle we'd opened during 2006. He also didn't send an Rx for Xanax, but I had 2,000 in reserve and an Rx from our Winslow doctor.

As long as we weren't presently at war or going to war, I gave up watching the news and went back to the History Channel, Military Channel, Discovery Channel and National Geographic. Occasionally, they'd show a new program instead of a rerun. After that scare with China, someone must have thought it would be a good idea to make a new batch of those possible disasters programs. There was the new documentary about how we'd lost both Iraqi Freedom (Iraq) and Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan). We'd also lost the Battle of Mogadishu (Blackhawk Down), but the press didn't beat up Clinton nearly as bad.

Maybe I really am dreaming and will wake up just before the good part. Where was I? Counting pills, I guess, we got a lot of pills and have an Rx for another one year supply of the non-psychoactive drugs, which I have enough of anyway. If'n I could find my powder scale, I'd just weigh 'em. I think it was Valentine's Day or about that time.

Sharon said we had enough put aside we could start looking for homes but not to buy one before June. I got Damon to drive me down to Show Low and we looked over his new homes and asked about used homes. He told us he was trying to talk one family into a newer home and if he did it, their old home might be available around April 1st. He didn't know of any repos at the moment. We looked at the floor plan and it was a model from the early '90s. It had the desert package, propane appliances, 3-bedrooms and 2 baths.

I asked about the price and he said it was worth more now than it cost the owners when they bought it, inflation. Probably about \$30,000 and it had drywall throughout, a swamp cooler and the people didn't have pets. We could take an option on it for \$1,000, ½ refundable or fully refundable if we bought any home from him. I wrote a check.

"Used ok with you?"



"I guess so. What do you think it will need?"

"I'd guess probably new linoleum and carpet and maybe a coat of paint. We can fix it up to look almost new."

"What about the appliances?"

"Replace as needed, Damon. You'll need an upright freezer and maybe a refrigerator. We'll wait and see on the stove and the dishwasher. It might need a new hot water heater, too; but if it does, we'll go electric."

"Why, I have a 3,000-gallon propane tank."

"Hooked into the generator that kicks in when the wind isn't blowing and the batteries are down. I haven't had to exercise it since we put it in. The wind doesn't blow enough to suit me and that's why we have the batteries."

"Is everything triple redundant?"

"There is only one of me."

"Thank you, Jesus."

"What did you say, can't you speak up?"

"Nothing."

I'm not quite as deaf as I pretend to be. He was driving hence he was on my left side with the ear that still works. The majority of the time I position myself so everyone is on my right side and I can't hear them. I don't know why noise irritates me so much, but ever since Amy and her kids moved in with us in Palmdale, my tolerance for noise has fallen.

o

I called Gunny and asked him to talk to his boss and schedule time to grade in a spot for the mobile home we took an option on. We'd set the median dividers about 1' in the ground the same as we had done with Derek's home. Once they were in place, we had poured ~4" of concrete to keep them in place. Sharon and I hadn't done that with our home and I wish we had. To go back and do it now would be very expensive and time consuming. The house would have to be split, the pipes removed, the dividers placed, the pipes relocated and concrete poured. It was just too damned much work.

Derek had a heater under his house to warm the batteries in the winter. I asked him about moving them to the shelter and he said he'd think about it. I suggested to Damon

and Lorrie that they each buy one battery a month for the next 6 months. If they did, we'd have 9,180 ah of juice stored up and probably wouldn't have to run the generator. That depended, of course, on whether they also had a 12kw inverter.

It was like to putting a jigsaw puzzle together. If you had told me back when I wrote *The Ark* that I'd actually have a place in a state where I wanted to live, have my children with me or nearby and I have nearly everything I always wanted, I simply wouldn't have believed you. None of it: not the firearms, not living in Arizona; and, not my boys with me. A two year supply of pills, not yet, but soon? Un-un. Peace and quiet? That was coming, right around the first of April. Don't you dare wake me up!

On March 23, 2008 I turned 65. The dealer in Show Low called to say that the home would be ready to set on April 7th. It looked to me like the other guys, the Democrats, stood a very good chance of taking both the Congress and the White House. Hillary wasn't doing well in the primaries. Iowa Democrats weren't ready for a lady President and she hadn't fared any better in New Hampshire. I'll bet Bill was disappointed.

Before the less-binding Iowa caucus first received national attention in the 1970s, the New Hampshire primary was the first binding indication of which presidential candidate would receive his political party's nomination. In defense of their primary, voters of New Hampshire have tended to downplay the importance of the Iowa caucus. "The people of Iowa pick corn, the people of New Hampshire pick presidents," said then-Governor John H. Sununu in 1988.

We hadn't broken any laws that I knew of, yet. Well, I did test the linear amplifier once, but that was all. As long as the radio mast was lowered, the StarDuster was legal. One thing I liked about the StarDuster was the fact that you could put 1,500 watts into it and not burn it up. Our car had a CB as did Derek and Mary's vehicles. A big fancy beam antenna for the ham radio would have been nice. However, a vertical was omnidirectional, perhaps a better choice under the circumstances. So, despite what Derek wanted, I didn't put up any beams.

Getting Damon and Lorrie into their house, getting Derek's batteries safely stored in the shelter with the rest and a few other things were high on my list. Maybe expanding Derek's garden a little made sense, but there were a lot of things that didn't even make the list. We didn't have any livestock to take care of except for our pets. Maybe later, but not now. If you're a farmer, and I wasn't, you got up before the sun and retired early. That didn't fit into my schedule; I was the classic night person and had been since January 1, 1999. In all truth, my nickname ought to be Insomnia, not TOM.

o

I only had tied up with one Marine. My reasoning on that related to the Texas Rangers and their saying, "One Riot, One Ranger." We hadn't spent any money putting in a fence, either. The Interstate was fenced and I hoped it would be enough. With Gunny

here, I could give you 50 reasons not to mess with our little ranch. Make that .50 caliber reasons. A ranch is:

1. An extensive farm, especially in the western United States, on which large herds of cattle, sheep, or horses are raised.
2. A large farm on which a particular crop or kind of animal is raised: a mink ranch.
3. A house in which the owner of an extensive farm lives.

The origin of the term is: American Spanish rancho, small farm, from Spanish, hut, group of people who eat together, from Old Spanish rancharse, to be billeted, from Old French se ranger, to be arranged, from renc, reng, row, line, of

I guess the beauty was in the eye of the owners. I just didn't feel like calling it our place. A slice of Heaven it was not. It was just 24 acres of sand that we kept the scrub brush off to prevent rattlers. If Winslow were attacked in some future war, I told myself, the most likely target would be the airport, ~4 miles away. They would use a ground burst to destroy the runway. The CEP on the DF-5 Chinese missile was 500 - 3,500 meters.

As of mid-2002 China had around 20 DF-5 ICBMs capable of targeting the United States. The total number of ICBMs capable of targeting the United States was anticipated to increase to around 25 by 2005 and may reach 60 by 2010.

The DF-41, a 3-stage 12,000 km-range missile similar to the American Minuteman and the Russian Topol M, will apparently be developed using the first two stages of the DF-31 along with a much larger third stage. The larger third stage and longer range of the DF-41 is made possible by the fact that, unlike the DF-31, the size of the DF-41 is not constrained by the requirement that it be fitted into a submarine launch tube. The cancelled 1,700km-range DF-25 ground mobile missile, was developed using the first two stages of the DF-31.

In August 2001 it was reported that China was developing a longer range version of its DF-31, designated the DF-31A. The DF-31A will reportedly be able to cover targets throughout the continental US from mainland China.

There is considerable uncertainty in published estimates of the size of the Chinese nuclear weapons stockpile. In the late 1980s it was generally held that China was the world's third-largest nuclear power, possessing a small but credible nuclear deterrent force of 225 to 300 nuclear weapons. Other estimates of the country's production capacities suggested that by the end of 1970 China had fabricated around 200 nuclear weapons, a number which could have increased to 875 by 1980. With an average annual production of 75 nuclear weapons during the 1980s, some estimates suggest that by the mid-1990s the Chinese nuclear industry had produced around 2,000 nuclear weapons for ballistic missiles, bombers, artillery projectiles and landmines.

During the 1991 Gulf War, 80% of the Tomahawk cruise missiles launched by the US forces hit their targets within 3 meters of the aim point after a 1,600km journey. The PLA

took note of the magnificent performance of these weapons and has been focusing its efforts on acquiring cruise missiles and their relevant technologies since the early 1990s.

China's LACM research and development is aided by an aggressive effort to acquire foreign cruise missile technology, particularly from Russia and Ukraine. China also sought dual-use technologies and subsystems from the United States and other foreign countries. According to a recent report, Ukraine exported at least 18 examples of the 3,000km-range, nuclear capable Kh-55 (NATO codename: AS-15 Kent) strategic cruise missiles to China and Iran between 1999 and 2001. China may have also obtained the design of the Kh-65SE, a shorter-range export version of the Kh-55 from Russia.

China is keen to develop its own Tomahawk-like long-range cruise missiles to deliver conventional and unconventional payloads. This is a time-consuming, technically challenging, and costly endeavor, but it offers China an opportunity to strengthen its manufacturing and technical capabilities, and it could become a source of national pride. Designations of current development projects reportedly include ChangFeng (CF), HongNiao (HN), and DongHai (DH), with possible range between 400 and 1,800km.

And, they would probably use our GPS system to guide their missiles. The CEP of the DF-31A was ~300m, and it was able to hit any target in the world. Were we kidding ourselves? Unlike our country, the Chinese didn't publish their military data in the Washington Post. They could have anywhere from 200 to 2,000 nuclear weapons. If they do, I may not be able to tell you, "I told you so."

o

Our fearless leader sent 6,000 National Guardsmen to the border with Mexico to keep out illegal aliens. The troops had guns they could use only in self-defense. Arnold had caved in and agreed to send troops but they couldn't even touch people who were captured sneaking in. Then, to top it off, the Congress couldn't really agree on anything. They did vote a little money to pay the NG because they were deployed, but other than that, nada. It had been that way ever since the Republicans took over Congress. They didn't really have enough votes or agreement among themselves to control anything. Whether you like or dislike the President, it really boiled down to him becoming more and more ineffective. He did well by me, I had Medicare part D.

Of course, when he lowered my taxes they went up, but what was new about that? I just hope he doesn't lower them much more, I can't afford it. Coincidentally with the Part D insurance, the drug companies cut off a lot of the free samples. I should say, some, but not all. Moving to Arizona cut me off from all the doctors who used to give them to me. If you're curious, they're still advertising drugs on TV and spending 15 seconds telling you why you should take it and 45 seconds telling you why you shouldn't.

FDA Alert: 4/7/2005:

Celebrex has been associated with an increased risk of serious adverse cardiovascular (CV) events in a long-term placebo controlled trial. Based on the currently available data, FDA has concluded that an increased risk of serious adverse CV events appears to be a class effect of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) (excluding aspirin). FDA has requested that the package insert for all NSAIDs, including Celebrex, be revised to include a boxed warning to highlight the potential increased risk of CV events and the well described risk of serious, and potentially life-threatening, gastrointestinal bleeding. FDA has also requested that the package insert for all NSAIDs be revised to include a contraindication for use in patients immediately post-operative from coronary artery bypass (CABG) surgery.

The company insists the drug is safe. When I took it, I belched sulfur, so I guess sulfa and I don't get along. All drugs are safe, until they kill you. Alcohol is a sedative-hypnotic drug.

◦

Sorry, I didn't hear anything on TV about any incoming missiles, yet. The Canadians caught another group of terrorists and these guys had 10 tons of fertilizer. Back in June of '06, they caught a bunch of al Qaeda related extremists who had 3 tons. I guess they didn't like French and were going to blow up Quebec. Canada was one people divided by two languages, whereas the English and we are two peoples divided by a common language.

Thank God there are other writers who have taken up the slack at Frugal's. This new guy, Ragin Cajun, has a very good story going. The guy who wrote the French joke was correct about his French; Babel Fish couldn't translate the joke.

I had tried to get all my stories posted to Collected Works before we moved, but got a bit tied up. I'd removed some of the formatting commands and had to reformat them, which took a lot of time. Whenever I had time, I worked on it, but it was a slow go because there were too many variations on the same theme. Plus there was the unfinished story that I hoped Damon might work on now. I guess I should have made copies and reformatted those to produce the pdf files. I had evolved into educating using a story to tie the details together. Not all of the links still worked, but that was a project for another time.

I benefited more than anyone who had read the stories, I'd learned a lot about locating things I wanted. I'd reviewed nearly every .30 caliber rifle made and kept coming back to the M1A. In the end, it really boiled down to the looks of the rifle. With a 5-round magazine in it, it looked very much like a hunting rifle. The only problem was those 5-round mags were harder than hell to get in and out. The 20-round mags, conversely, were very easy to handle even with my half numb hands. If I hadn't settled on quality instead of quantity, for very little more, I could have bought 3 of the FAL rifles.

◦

We went to church and as I listened to the sermon, I realized that if you'd heard one sermon, you'd hear 'em all. Christianity is all about faith and behavior. Christ said if a man smites you on the cheek, turn to him the other. He didn't say what to do after that. On the other hand, he'd never heard of a gun. While I agreed in principle, if someone smacked me on the face, I probably fall down and break my butt. They say when you get older; the bones don't heal so fast.

Fleataxi once gave some good advice, "Shoot 'em all and let God sort 'em out." Was he talking about Muslims or the French? The answer is probably yes. The payment on Damon and Lorrie's place was \$202.53 for 15 years. They got it for \$30,000 and we put \$6,000 down. They shampooed the carpets, waxed the floors and washed a few dirty spots off the walls. We shopped Goodwill for some good used furniture until we could save up some money to buy them something new. They were still buying batteries and hadn't gotten an inverter. Sharon got them a service of four in plates and silverware plus some pots and pans and a can opener. The hot water heater was nearly new and they'd left the refrigerator because their new place came with one.

They could use our washer and dryer for now; I really wanted them to finish off buying batteries. Sharon had other ideas and they went shopping. I hadn't paid much attention to our money situation since we'd move. She'd been holding out on me and technically, the bedroom suite, dining room furniture and hutch in Palmdale belonged to Lorrie. She paid a mover to bring all of Lorrie's things from Palmdale and hired a lawyer to force David to reimburse Lorrie for her half of the house. Six weeks later, a check came and they went and bought everything they'd shopped for. I'd forgotten that Lorrie had our freezer.

Damon had a half way good computer and I insisted he connect it to a faster Ethernet hardware network. With the money, Lorrie bought the remainder of the batteries and an inverter. Finally, Derek caved in and we moved his ton of batteries. Finished? You're never finished, but sometimes you get pretty damned close. The day the final delivery came in and all the tanks were topped off, I went outside, faced west and stuck out my tongue. Gary, be careful what you wish for, God has a sense of humor.

Where the hell was Ronald anyway? Cedar Hill, New Mexico, if I remember right. Clarence was wherever he was. Alive or dead, I had no idea. They didn't call me and I didn't call them. If AA has its own Heaven, we'll get together then. Sort of sounds like a Hank William's Jr. song.

When TSHTF, most people won't be ready; we were ready, therefore, TSHTF probably wouldn't happen. Gunny Martinez was still around and came out to shoot most Saturdays. However, he got himself a new girlfriend and we didn't see quite so much of him. A quick head count came up with Sharon and me, 2; Derek's family, 4; Damon, Lorrie and Jeffrey, 3; Amy's tribe, 3; and Gunny and his girlfriend, 2. Total = 14. Two more pair of bunks and we'd all have a place to sleep.

I suggested that someone ought to think about putting in 2 more pairs of bunks in the shelter. They could copy the bunks that were already there. After Sunday dinner, Derek, Damon and Gunny left to take measurements. When they came back, the opinion seemed to be that it was doable, barely. They would get the materials, pre-cut the pieces and assemble them in the shelter. It would be up to me to find the mattresses.

o

"I'll find them. I'll tell you what, though. Y'all better be thinking about which bunk is yours and putting the clothes you need down there now. If everything you need is down there, all you'll need is your BOB and your weapons."

"What BOBs?"

"You don't have BOBs? It's a bug out bag that you carry a few essentials in so no matter where you are when TSHTF, you can get by for a short while."

"Do you have one?"

"Yep. It's a military style fanny pack with a multi-tool, one of the inserts from a survival knife handle, a box of ammo, a lifeboat ration, several bags of water, a handgun and fire starting materials. I never go anywhere, so that's enough for me."

A discussion ensued and they decided that they all ought to have some sort of BOB that would be appropriate to their circumstances. I made notes because I realized the Amy didn't have anything, she probably didn't keep her tank full and probably didn't have any spare gas. I decided to put something together for her. I called up and told her to come up the following weekend. I figured she needed a car kit, a couple of cans of gas and some rations. She didn't like guns but I didn't care.

I hurried and put together a Mini-14 with a folding stock, 7 30-round magazines (PMI), 2 jerry cans of gas, a case of MREs, a case of water, a Leatherman, a hunting knife, etc. I plotted the shortest route to Winslow, 177 miles – ~3¼ hours, and made up a new map. The fastest route was 25 miles longer and 20 minutes quicker, she could choose based on the circumstances. I had it in mind to ask Sharon to buy the kids just enough clothes that we could stock the shelter for Audrey and Udell. Amy and Sharon wore the same size.

"Amy that gas is for one thing and one thing only, to get you here. I can refill your tank and the cans when you come here, but whatever you do, don't use those cans for anything else. They're stabilized and should be good for a year. There's a small rifle sighted in for 100-yards, some ammo, food and other things you might need. I made up a map of two ways to get here. If I-17 is clogged, you go the other way; it's shorter but takes a little longer. I also picked up a CB for your SUV and Damon will install it."

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 8

*I've got this friend who is lonely  
She's afraid she'll never find her one and only  
A little shy but she can be fun  
If the right guy came along  
Would you know someone?*

*I've got this friend and it sounds crazy  
But he's been feeling that way too a whole lot lately  
And interested, oh I'm sure he'd be  
I can almost speak for him  
He's that close to me*

*Maybe in each other  
They might find a lover  
They've been missin' until now  
They'd trust the judgment of  
Two friends like us who care so much  
Can we get them together...somehow*

*I've got this friend  
Yeah, I think I know her  
My arms can almost feel the way he'd hold her  
It's like he's here when you describe him  
And if he's anything like you I'm sure she'd like him*

*This is not about trying to go back in time  
This is not about where I'll be a year down the line  
It's just moment to moment, surviving somehow  
This is not about then, this is just about now*

*Can we get them together...I've got this friend*

That's the Faith Hill tune that a certain blond used to capture me, a very long time ago...  
I've made some dumb mistakes in my life, but that one was a Lulu.

o

"You're crazy Dad, nothing is going to happen."

"Good. Do me a favor just once and humor me. Keep those MREs in your apartment because heat will cause them to spoil much sooner than normal. Whenever you take a road trip, always take this stuff with you."



If you're looking for TSHTF in this chapter, I'll tell you right now, it doesn't happen, but we're getting very, very close. There is some speculation that Beijing might use the 2008 Olympic Games as a cover to attack Taiwan. The Games of the XXIX Olympiad – Beijing 2008 will take place from 8 to 24 August 2008. The Games in Beijing will play host to the 28 summer sports currently on the Olympic program. Approximately 10,500 athletes are expected to participate in the Games with around 20,000 accredited media bringing the Games to the world. It occurs to me that that amounts to 30,500 hostages.

Concern over a formal declaration of de jure Taiwanese independence is a strong impetus for the military buildup between Taiwan and mainland China. Some people believe that Taiwan will attempt a declaration of independence during the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Others point out that the current US administration has publicly declared that given the status quo, it would not aid Taiwan if it were to declare independence unilaterally.

The Taiwanese couldn't agree last time to declare independence and Dick and Condie, together with Putin got China to back off.

From the perspective of the ROC constitution, which the mainstream political parties such as the KMT and DPP currently respect and recognize, changing the ROC's governing status or completely clarifying Taiwan's political status would at best require amending the ROC constitution. In other words, if reunification supporters wanted to reunify Taiwan with the mainland in such a way that would effectively abolish the ROC or affect the ROC's sovereignty, or if independence supporters wanted to abolish the ROC and establish a Republic of Taiwan, they would need to amend the ROC constitution. Passing an amendment requires an unusually broad political consensus, which includes approval from three-quarters of a quorum of members of the Legislative Yuan. This quorum requires at least three-quarters of all members of the Legislature. After passing the legislature, the amendments need ratification from at least fifty percent of all eligible voters of the ROC, irrespective of voter turnout.

Given these harsh constitutional requirements, neither the pan-greens nor pan-blues can unilaterally change Taiwan's political and legal status with respect to the ROC's constitution. However, extreme Taiwan independence supporters view the ROC's constitution as illegal and therefore believe that amendments to the ROC constitution are an invalid way to change Taiwan's political status.

o

The possibility of war, the close geographical proximity of ROC-controlled Taiwan and PRC-controlled mainland China, and the resulting flare-ups that occur every few years, conspire to make this one of the most watched focal points in the Pacific. Both sides have chosen to have a strong naval presence. However, naval strategies between both powers greatly shifted in the 1980s and 1990s, when the PRC assumed a more aggressive posture by building landing craft, and Taiwan adopted a more defensive attitude by building and buying frigates and missile destroyers.

The PRC's air force is considered large and powerful, although it is not yet capable of controlling Taiwan's airspace in the event of a conflict. The ROC's air force relies on Taiwan's second generation fighters. The ROC has approximately 150 US-built F-16s, approximately 60 French-built Mirage 2000-5s, and approximately 130 locally developed IDFs (Indigenous Defense Fighters). All of these ROC fighter jets are able to conduct BVR (Beyond Visual Range) combat missions with respective BVR missiles, while only a handful of PRC fighter airplanes are able to conduct such tasks.

In 2003, the ROC made a purchase of four missile destroyers – the former USS Kidd and three sister ships (modified Spruance class), and expressed a strong interest in the Arleigh Burke class. But with the growth of the PRC navy and air force, some doubt that the ROC could withstand a determined invasion from mainland China in the future. This also leads to a view that Taiwanese independence, if it is to be implemented, should be attempted as early as possible while the ROC still had the capacity for an all-out military conflict. Over the last three decades, estimates of how long Taiwan can withstand a full scale invasion from across the Strait without any outside help have decreased from three months to only six days. Given such estimates, the US Navy has continued in practicing "surging" its carrier groups, giving it the experience necessary to respond quickly due to an attack on Taiwan. The US also collects data on the PRC's military deployments, such as through the use of spy satellites. It would take days, if not weeks, for China to prepare for a full assault on Taiwan, so the US and Taiwan would have some time to prepare for an attack.

However, numerous reports issued by the PRC, ROC and US militaries make wildly mutually contradictory statements about the possible defense of Taiwan.

Naturally, the possible war is not being planned in a vacuum. In 1979, the US Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act, a law generally interpreted as mandating US defense of Taiwan in the event of an attack from the Chinese Mainland (the Act is applied to Taiwan and the Pescadores, but not to Quemoy and Matsu). The United States maintains the world's largest permanent fleet in the Pacific Region near Taiwan. The Seventh Fleet, operating primarily out of various bases in Japan, is a powerful naval contingent built upon the world's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk. Although the stated purpose of the fleet is not Taiwanese defense, it is safely assumed from past action that that is one of the reasons why the fleet is stationed in those waters.

Since 2000, Japan renewed its defense obligations with the US and also embarked on a rearmament program, partly in response to fears that Taiwan would be invaded. Some analysts believed that the PRC could launch pre-emptive strikes on military bases in Japan to deter US and Japanese forces from coming to Taiwan's aid. Japanese strategic planners also see an independent Taiwan as vital, not only because Taiwan controls valuable shipping routes, but its capture by China would make Japan more vulnerable. Historically, in WW II, although the US captured the Philippines, another viable target would have been Taiwan as that would enable a direct attack on Japan. However, crit-

ics assert that the PRC would not wish to give Japan and the US such an excuse to intervene.

◦

I was also keeping an eye on the Middle East. Iran had stopped supplying oil to anyone except favored neighbors who didn't need much and the PRC. Because they supplied  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the world's oil, it severely strained the Saudis to make up the difference. All the other Middle East countries were pumping and shipping oil at maximum capacity. It wasn't enough and the price of gasoline kept creeping up.

Which was fine, in a way, Detroit was producing more hybrid vehicles and E85 certified vehicles. The 2006 H-1 Hummer was the last year that size vehicle had been produced except for the military. Ah, the military. With the troops out of Afghanistan and Iraq, budgets got cut big time. Frustrated with so many failures of so many of the newer systems, the US Army adopted the SCAR-L rifle as its official rifle. It was very flexible and almost everyone was happy with the new weapon.

The US Marine Corps, after its experience with the 5.56mm M16s and M4s and the 9mm M9s, adopted the SCAR-H rifle and the SA HD .45. It's ok folks, Robert McNamara had passed away. They adopted the SCAR-H CQC as the weapon of choice for combat vehicles, mainly because of its compact size. Personally, I don't care for the SCAR, but at least the Marines are using the 7.62x51mm and .45 ACP weapons. That means more of the 7.62mm and .45ACP overruns. How many times must we learn the same lesson? The .38 is a 9mm and in the Philippines, it didn't work out and they had to resort to Colt Peacemakers.

Derek bought a second FAL rifle, this one was for Mary. I ordered her a SA HD .45. The dealer told me it would take a week to get it in; SA couldn't build them fast enough since the Corps had adopted it. He had the 13-round magazines and I bought 4 more. Derek told me the MOLLE gear was crap. I didn't care, I loved ALICE. Yeah, I know, it was from the Vietnam era. It lasted for a very long time before they 'improved' it with MOLLE and MOLLE II. Not everything is bad because it wasn't invented THIS year. I'm just surprised the Marines didn't resurrect the M14; they used a lot of them in Iraq.

◦

In anticipation of the forthcoming Olympics, several CSGs set sail from the west coast. They slipped them out one at a time and nobody took particular notice. We moved slowly into summer and Derek was off for 2 weeks doing his summer whatever. I was out on my ATV cutting loose the brush as it grew. I kept a sharp lookout for those rattlers. If you let them, they will slither away rather than confront you. I made plenty of noise; they had to hear me coming.

When we finally had a little cash on hand, I gave a bunch to Gunny and told him the next time he went to the Res; I needed all the Kool 100's (box) the money could buy. He

complained I was getting him to do my dirty work. I asked him if he knew anyone else with a Tac-50. I gave him 10 crisp new \$100 bills. When I heard a news snippet on TV, we went to Costco and loaded up again. I also called Amy and suggested that she come and visit for most of August, I'd make it worth her while.

After the earlier scare with China, they advanced the construction schedule of the Bush. She was supposed to join the fleet 2009, but she was undergoing final trials, well ahead of the revised schedule. I had a sinking feeling that she'd soon be sailing around the horn and headed out to join the Reagan. They had already assembled her aviation group and as soon as the ship was signed off, they could land on her. Originally she was schedule to join the fleet in 2008 but they'd slipped the date. They must be working overtime now.

I was getting so nervous, I called Ammoman and ordered 20 cases of ammo, 5 of .45ACP and 15 of 7.62x51mm. He had the stuff on stripper clips in bandoleers and it was Lake City overruns. Absolutely fricking perfect! He also had some Talon Blue Tip Incendiary (.50BMG) so I bought 200 rounds. Gunny had all of the reloaded ammo and I'd replaced every round we'd ever shot. We weren't short on .50BMG.

Sharon told me we had too much coffee, so I bought another 36 cans. She said we were long on toilet paper too, so I only bought 24 packages of that. That \$1,000 got me 40 cartons of Kool's. She said we had way too many pinto beans so I bought more and 300# of rice (I had a full case of Beano).

o

The Triumph S-400, also known as the S-300PMU3, is a new generation of air defense and theater anti-missile weapon developed by the Almaz Central Design Bureau as an evolution of the S-300PMU [SA-10] family. This new system is intended to detect and destroy airborne targets at a distance of up to 400 km (2-2.5 times greater than the previous S-300PMU system). The main difference between the PMU-2 and the S-400 is greater engagement range of the latter, about 250 mi. against aircraft versus 125 mi., a larger number of targets it can track and improved electronic counter-countermeasures. The Triumph system includes radars capable of detecting low-signature targets. And the anti-missile capability of the system has been increased to the limits established by the ABM Treaty demarcation agreements – it can intercept targets with velocities of up to 4.8 km/sec, corresponding to a ballistic missile range of 3,500 km.

What you see above is the public version that is on Global Security.

In Moscow, a conversation took place late in June of 2008. I've translated it for you.

"Comrade President."

"Report."

"The new warheads are ready. The S-300VM can intercept anything that they throw at us."

"By they you mean any nuclear power?"

"Da. The missile has been upgraded and extended beyond the range permitted by the ABM Treaty. The new warheads produce a 5kT blast. We have made several tests of the missiles but haven't had an opportunity to test the new warhead."

"What were the results of the tests?"

"98%+ probability of a knock down of a missile warhead and 100% probability of a knock down of an enemy bomber. The 2500 system has been designed to incorporate multiple radar emitters to set up a bi-static array, which separates transmitter and receiver. Such an array picks up signals deflected below or to the side of stealth aircraft shaped and coated for reflecting radar beams."

"And the funding?"

"Fully funded and fully deployed, Comrade President."

"Yes, Comrade General, what is it?"

"Perhaps a demonstration to the Chinese and the Americans?"

"I think not. They know of the S-400 and believe that we didn't complete this program. You could perhaps arrange a test at sea that we could deny?"

"Perhaps from a Sovremenny class guided missile destroyer, Da?"

"Camouflage it to look like one we sold to the Chinese."

"Da, Comrade President."

o

THAAD is scheduled for deployment in 2011. The MEADS program is currently executing a thirty two and half month Risk Reduction Effort (RRE) phase. The primary objectives of RRE are to develop program cost and schedule consensus to mature critical technologies, and prepare program planning for entry into the Design and Development (D&D) Phase at Milestone B in 2004. The D&D Phase is currently planned to be a six year, ten month effort producing six MEADS Fire Units with the First Unit Equipped in FY12. The D&D Phase will be executed under an International Memorandum (MOU) between the participating nations. The overall procurement objective of 1,159 PAC-3 missiles remains unchanged. The larger purchases in FY-03 and FY-04 may be offset

by lower production in FY-08 and FY-09. Instead of buying 216 missiles in each of those years, DOD would receive 184 units annually.

In the FY2006 budget request, DOD terminated some programs whose cost-effectiveness no longer warranted their continuation, such as the C-130J and the Joint Common Missile. The HAWK missile and warhead were modified to allow the HAWK to better engage enemy ballistic missiles. Specifically, the upgrade improved the HAWK's missile fuse and warhead which resulted in an "improved lethality missile." Additionally, improvements to the launcher made the HAWK more mobile and better able to interface with the missiles. The total HAWK inventory is 37,000 and only the Marines have them.

o

Had I been in charge, I would not have abrogated the ABM Treaty until we had a working missile system or three. All this time the US thought that nobody had a workable ABM system that would work against both missiles and stealth bombers. However, if you remember, only Russia and France was putting stuff into orbit with any degree of certainty. We could launch satellites but had to depend on the Russians to reach the ISS.

Once we had a dependable, flyable ABM missile, we should have started building them. And then, when they finally got THAAD and MEADS to work the way they should, they could fit the electronics. Coulda, woulda and shoulda are all members of AA.

*This is a breaking news alert. Sources revealed that an anti-ballistic missile test using a nuclear warhead was conducted earlier today in the Pacific Ocean. The test, which was obviously timed to coincide with Independence Day, was successful with the ABM successfully intercepting a missile fired from a ship in the North Pacific. Both vessels have been identified as Russian build Sovremenny class guided missile destroyers sold to the People's Republic of China. Beijing denied conducting any missile tests.*

"They'd deny it if we had pictures," Gunny said.

"If the test was successful, why would they deny it? I don't know Gunny, one Russian destroyer looks just like another Russian destroyer. Why do they assume it was the Chinese?"

"That's above my pay grade Tom."

"I think that all we can say with any degree of certainty is that the target and interceptor were launched from Russian built ships. Both Russia and China have those."

"Does anyone else?"

"Not that class. Are you going to marry her?"

"Norma? I've thought about asking her, but haven't. How long have you been married?"

"Sharon and I got married in 1976. We got divorced in 1997 and remarried in 1999."

"Why did you do that?"

"I thought the grass was greener on the other side of the fence."

"Was it?"

"Yes, but it had stuff in it."

"What kind of stuff?"

"Broken glass, rocks, barbed wire and rattlesnakes. Got myself cut to ribbons and bit on the butt."

"A case of wrong-headed thinking?"

"Yeah, I guess. The first one got tired of me and the second one never really liked me."

"Slow learner?"

"Very slow."

"I read your stories."

"What did you think?"

"Who are the 3 amigos?"

"Ron Brown, Clarence Floyd and me."

"The three of you always seemed to win your fights and never get hurt."

"We never gave the other guy an even break. We aren't part of the military and didn't sign any convention. If you are sure they're a bad guy, shoot 'em in the back. If you don't know 'em, avoid them if you can."

"And if you can't?"

"Keep 'em covered and never bunch up."

"Think we're going to have a war?"

"Yep, but I don't know when or with whom."

"Care to guess?"

"Russia, China, Iran or maybe Iraq."

"I can see the first two, they're large nuclear powers, by why Iran and Iraq?"

"Terrorists. According to the paper, Iran was supplying the Iraqi insurgents with the IEDs that could blow up our vehicles. They've never stopped enriching uranium and they might have a bomb."

"How would they know how to build a bomb?"

"That guy from Pakistan. I can't remember his name anymore but he was helping people with nuclear weapons."

"Are you talking about that guy named Khan?"

"That's the guy Gunny. Khan confessed to sharing nuclear technology with Iran, Libya, and North Korea in a 12-page document presented to President Pervez Musharraf, according to a briefing given by government officials in Islamabad."

"Where did you hear that?"

"I read it in the Christian Science Monitor."

"When?"

"I can't remember, but it was while we lived in Palmdale."

o

It seems to me that it was back in 2004 but I wasn't sure. I was sure about one thing, the Cold War had been between the US and Russia. I'd read the article that talked about the Russian's playing with danger by supplying the Chinese. Putin must have promised them something to get them to back off Taiwan. Only Putin and the Chinese knew for sure, but Condie and Dick had been there, so maybe they knew. If it was anything that wasn't in the best interests of the USA, they didn't.

Condoleezza Rice spoke the language the European nations, Russia and China wanted to hear before she met their representatives in Vienna Thursday, June 1, to discuss their incentives package for cajoling Iran into abandoning its proscribed nuclear activities. The US Secretary of State said the US was willing to join European allies in direct talks with Iran - provided Iran abandoned its uranium enrichment program. Tehran predictably dismissed the offer as propaganda and presenting no "new and rational solu-



tion” to Iran’s nuclear case. The enrichment program would go on, declared Iran’s foreign minister Manouchehr Mottaki.

Rice had her answers ready for that response. Anticipating an Iranian brush-off, the US has already begun implementing its own package of sanctions. As Rice put it, “We’re prepared to go either way.”

She also made it clear that the United States would not “swear off ever using military action.”

The two parties are therefore closer to a collision course – first financial and, further down the road, military – than to dialogue.

Washington has also taken into account that its allies will not go along with stringent penalties for Iran’s refusal to give up activities that could lead to the production of a nuclear weapon. Russia and China are too heavily staked in business with Tehran to go along with this measure. And even if UN financial sanctions became feasible, it would take two to three years for them to bite. The Islamic republic has piled up \$50 billion in reserve assets from rocketing oil prices, a solid cushion against real damage during the period it needs to complete its weapons programs.

With this timeline in mind, the US Treasury has begun activating a go-it-alone program targeting the personal finances of Iranian officials in foreign banks and government transactions, with a view to cutting the regime’s access to foreign currency and global markets and its isolation in the regime in the international financial community.

Three weeks ago, American emissaries began quietly visiting banks and financial institutions in West Europe and Asia. They showed the heads of these institutions lists of Iranian firms, industries and private tycoons associated in one way or another with Iran’s nuclear effort. They then indicated that American banking and corporate doors would slam shut against any financial bodies continuing to do business with the black-listed Iranians. Our sources report that the Americans were pleasantly surprised by the success of this quiet campaign.

Many of the banking and financial bodies lobbied in this way were quick to cut their ties with the named Iranians, with immediate impact: A loud outcry arose in Tehran’s central bazaar where most business with foreigners is contracted.

During this period, Iran has activated assets of its own – the surrogate terrorist groups the Islamic Republic maintains across the Middle East.

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 9

*This land is mine, God gave this land to me  
This brave and ancient land to me  
And when the morning sun reveals her hills and plain  
Then I see a land where children can run free.*

*So take my hand and walk this land with me  
And walk this lovely land with me  
Though I am just a man, when you are by my side  
With the help of God, I know I can be strong.*

*Though I am just a man, when you are by my side  
With the help of God, I know I can be strong  
To make this land our home  
If I must fight, I'll fight to make this land our own  
Until I die, this land is mine.*

◦

That was the theme to Exodus. It was written by Pat Boone.

Washington sources report that President George W. Bush's phone call to Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert Wednesday night was more than a courtesy briefing on the Rice announcement. They held a down-to-earth discussion on the efforts needed to repulse Iran's already-unfolding campaign of violence.

Another asset Tehran proposes to field is the supply-and-operations network it has planted in Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian areas – mainly to target Israel. Israel's security situation has deteriorated sharply in the last two weeks on two fronts, the Lebanese and the Gaza borders. Faced with US sanctions, the Iranian regime proposes to cash in on a third asset by buttressing the Hamas government's backbone and its ability to stand up to international isolation as the head of Palestinian government.

This tactic has not been lost on Hamas's rival, Palestinian Authority chairman and Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas. Even though the Bush administration and Olmert government are wooing him intensely to block Hamas, Abbas tends to lean more towards Moscow than Washington. Consequently, while Fatah and Hamas continue their internal feud, there are indications that in the final resort the two Palestinian groups may hook up so as not to miss the opportunity developing over the last few hours of gaining Iran as a strategic partner against Israel.

I figure it was only going to end one way, Israeli bombers would take out every Iranian Nuclear asset. They'd done it to Iraq, why not Iran? I had no idea what we had supplied the Israelis with in terms of bombs, but if we hadn't supplied what they needed, they had

a couple of hundred of their own, and I was pretty sure THOSE bombs were up to the task.

o

On July 17th, a Chinese Kilo class submarine was on patrol off the coast from Vladivostok. I've translated the conversation for you.

"Conn, Sonar."

"Conn, Aye."

"We have a target bearing 80° relative; it appears to be a Sovremenny class guided missile destroyer, range 20,000 meters."

"Bring us to periscope depth."

"Periscope depth, aye."

"Sonar, Conn."

"Sonar, Aye."

"What is the vessel's course?"

"Conn, Sonar, 270° true."

"XO, load tubes 1 through 6. Raise the scope."

"Range 14,000 meters, bearing 71°. Down scope."

"Sonar, Conn."

"Sonar, aye."

"Estimated speed of the vessel?"

"Conn, Sonar, 14 knots."

"XO plot a solution."

"XO, aye."

"Raise the scope."

"Range 9,000 meters, bearing 59°, speed unchanged. Down scope."

"Solution laid in Captain."

"Fire tubes 1 through 6 on my mark."

"Fire tubes 1 through 6 on your mark, Aye."

"Fire."

"Firing tubes 1 through 6, Aye."

"Running time?"

"Sixty seconds."

The men watched the second sweep hand of the large clock. At 61 seconds they heard the first explosion follow by 3 more."

"Raise the scope."

"XO, take a look. Call out what you see."

"She's rolling, down by the head... She's capsized and sinking... She's down."

"Sonar, Conn."

"Sonar, Aye."

"Report."

"She's breaking up Conn. I hear compartments collapsing."

"Conn, Aye."

"Will they blame us?"

"A Russian built submarine sinking a Russian Guided Missile Destroyer? I think not."

American SOSUS operators heard the whole thing. They were tracking the destroyer and heard her sink. A quick check with the CNO revealed the US didn't have any submarines in the area.

Russia lodged a protest of the sinking of one of its Guide Missile Destroyers with the UN. They stated that the Destroyer had been sunk by an unknown party. The American Ambassador to the UN reported that the United States had no subs in the area. He went on to say that the US did have submarines in the general area of Taiwan.

o

Any action to defend these 24 acres of sand would be too much action, I wasn't THAT old, but I felt every minute of my 65 years. Manufactured housing had its advantages and its disadvantages. The principal advantage was the price, relatively inexpensive. The major disadvantage was that it wasn't as sturdy as a conventional home. At Sharon's insistence, the well house was made out of filled in concrete block and had a galvanized (tin) roof. She claimed that would help to keep it from burning up our supplies. I wasn't so sure; we had all those bottles of vegetable oil stored in there.

The first event in what would later be called WW III had been the sinking of the Russian destroyer. The second was the Israeli attack on Iran in early August. Using several flights of fighter bombers, they dropped precision munitions on the Iranian targets. The facilities located below ground were hit by ground bursting nukes. The nation of Israel was on full alert, just waiting for retaliation. With the exception of Egypt and Jordan, their neighbors ganged up on them.

*My fellow Americans,*

*I was informed by the Israeli Prime Minister that they had several flights of fighter bombers inbound to Iran. Satellite surveillance reveals that Israel used both convention and non-conventional weapons, and totally destroyed Iran's nuclear program.*

*Russia and China immediately filed protests with the United Nations and several of Israel's neighbors are mobilizing. Congress has issued a Joint Resolution in support of Israel.*

*As Commander-in-Chief, it is my decision to provide logistical support to Israel but not to commit our military forces. I have issued such directives as are necessary to fulfill that commitment.*

*In light of the situation, I have raised the readiness condition of our military forces to DEFCON-3 and the Department of Homeland Security has raised the threat level to Orange for the country and to Red for select cities.*

*FEMA recommends that every person in the United States prepare for possible difficulties by securing a two week supply of food, water and medications.*

*Over the past several weeks, most of our naval forces have left their home ports and are now at their action stations. We do not want war with any nation. However, our forces remain on alert.*

*Please stay tuned for announcements by FEMA about necessary preparations.*

*Thank you and goodnight.*

*God Bless America.*

◦

"Katie bar the door, here come the Indians."

"Hey, that wasn't nice."

"Sorry Gunny, it's just an expression."

"What do you have for supplies, Tom?"

"Ten of the one-year deluxe foods supplies from Walton Feed, and a lot of stuff from Costco. The shelter sleeps 14 now and has enough food in it for 100 days. There's a place for you and Norma."

"You've been planning for this, haven't you?"

"Yes and no. If you prepare and don't need it, you've wasted money. If you don't prepare and do need it, money can't buy it when you need it."

"What brought you to Winslow?"

"An argument between Sharon and Amy and a U-Haul truck; Sharon picked Winslow, not me."

"Anything I can do to help?"

"We have to get the potatoes out of the ground."

"I'll take a couple of days off, we aren't busy anyway."

"Thanks."

◦

"Call Amy and tell her to get her butt up her."

"Shouldn't she wait?"

"That fine with me, she doesn't like me anyway. Gunny and I are going to dig the potatoes. If there is anything you need, Mary and you should go to Prescott and get it."

"How are you on cigarettes?"

"That's like toilet paper, you can never have too many."

"We don't need anything else that I can think of."

"I'll ask Gunny to go to the Res, can we spare \$1,000?"

"I suppose. Are we really going to have a war?"

"I hope not. It does look like it; it reminds me of the Cuban Missile Crisis."

"What do you mean?"

"Tensions are high. Russia and China are mad at Israel and we're backing them. Somebody tested an ABM in June and it worked, so they might think they're invincible. If we do have a war, I know who is going to win."

"Who is that?"

"The cockroaches. Moscow is GMT plus 3. Beijing is GMT plus 8. We are GMT minus 7. That puts Moscow 10 hours ahead of us and Beijing 15 hours ahead of us. Any attack against us would come in the middle of the night. I think I'd better stay up nights and sleep days until we know what is going to happen."

"Should we expect a terrorist attack?"

"If they're already here, it might be possible, otherwise, I doubt it."

If I were giving odds, I'd say there was a 66% chance that WW III was going to happen. However, in 1962, I was figuring the odds at 95% and it didn't happen then. I was as frightened now as I had been in 1962, with one difference; I was 19 years old then, now I was 65. I was single then, now I had grandchildren.

"Damon, why don't you call Britt and get your kids to visit us?"

"They're in school Dad."

"Call Mutt then and tell her this is the real thing. At least they can build a shelter in the basement."

"Should I go get the kids?"

"How far is it?"

"1,500 miles, about 24 hours each way."

"Call her first. If she doesn't believe you, I'll give you the money for gas and you can take Sharon's car. Don't plan on getting a lot of rest. You'd better be able to make the round trip in less than 60 hours."

Carrie told Damon he was crazy. She had that right, but she wouldn't even listen to him about putting in a basement shelter. I gave him the keys to the car and \$500. Gunny and I put 4 cans of gas in the trunk and off he went.

I later learned that he'd gotten to Britt and checked into a motel. He'd picked the kids up when they were getting out of school and told them he'd give them a ride home. He had Sharon's cell phone and called Carrie from I-35, telling her he taken the kids to grandpa's house for a visit and not to look for him. The kids were safe and he was entitled to a visit. They didn't know what kind of car to look for and Carrie thought that we still lived in Palmdale. Desperate times call for desperate measures. Apparently she decided not to call the cops.

o

Gunny and I dug the potatoes, and while he was on the Res getting me cigarettes, I went into Winslow and picked up 4 air mattresses. I didn't know the kids sizes and picked up an assortment of jeans, shirts and underwear. We moved a bit of extra food into the shelter and Sharon had all of our tanks topped off. That left us flat-ass broke. Amy showed up and she was very angry about coming to Winslow. Damon was back from Iowa in 58 hours.

The third and final event that triggered WW III occurred near the end of the 2008 Olympic Games when Taiwan formally declared independence. The moment the Games ended, China expelled all of the participants. Damon called Carrie and told her the kids were safe at Grandpa's and not to come looking. As soon as the situation warranted, he bring the kids back to Britt. He used Sharon's cell phone and Carrie had Caller ID. All she knew was we were in Arizona, Sharon's cell phone had a Flagstaff exchange.

Carrie was very angry. She insisted on speaking to me.

"Are you behind this?"

"Yes. If this blows over, the kids will be back in Iowa in no time with a bunch of new clothes, we'll find the money to fly them home or Damon will bring them back. I really think that you should put in a basement shelter, Carrie. You are directly east of several of our Minuteman silos."

"Where are you?"

"Sedona, Arizona. If something should happen, the kids are safe, I have a bomb shelter."



"You're as crazy as Damon."

"Worse, I've had more practice."

"I want them back here by the first of October and no later."

"Ok, I promise."

"Promise what?"

"To try and have them back by October 1st."

"If they aren't, I'm calling the cops."

"Ok, you do what you must, but we'll try to have them back by then."

o

It would be just my luck that nothing would happen, like the last time, and I would end up in trouble with the law. Aaron and Eric slept in one of our bedrooms and Britney in the other. Damon gave the leftover money back to Sharon and she took Britney shopping for some ladies undergarments and exchanged some of the wrong sized garments I'd purchased.

I called Iowa and asked Matt if he could possibly make the Trust dispersion early under the present circumstances. By the 4th Wednesday of September 2008, the 24th, we were liquid again. We pulled all of the money out of the two bank accounts in cash. If something did happen, it would be the last cash we would see and in the early days following an event, some people might accept cash. We let the kids call back to Iowa as much as they wanted and that served to keep Carrie pacified. I think Britney probably told her mother that they were in Winslow.

o

During the nighttime hours of Thursday September 25, possible early Friday, September 26, China attacked the US, Russia and Israel. In turn, Russia attacked China, the US and Israel. However, Russia waited until they had satellite data before selecting their targets, thereby greatly increasing the number of US targets.

For our part, we blasted China into the Stone Age. Russia, it seems had an ABM system that was rather effective and it took out ~90% of our warheads. Our B-2 bombers were withheld until we had a damage assessment. We made 3 successive attacks with the B-2s before Russia also became a Stone Age country.

The lesson is that no matter how effective your ABM system seems to be, it can be overwhelmed and the units it depends on for targeting can be destroyed. A determined

enemy can empty his warehouses and use up his nuclear weapons as long as he can keep his bombers flying. The majority of our weapons had been targeted on Russia and at least 250 got through in the first wave.

If you have a list of the 100 largest cities in the US, you have a beginning of the target list used by the Chinese and the Russians. A small nuclear weapon took out the Winslow airport in a ground burst. You may recall the effect of a 1mT ground burst:

3,000 Rem

Distance: 30 miles

Much more than a lethal dose of radiation. Death can occur within hours of exposure. About 10 years will need to pass before levels of radioactivity in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

900 Rem

Distance: 90 miles

A lethal dose of radiation. Death occurs from two to fourteen days.

300 Rem

Distance: 160 miles

Causes extensive internal damage, including harm to nerve cells and the cells that line the digestive tract, and results in a loss of white blood cells. Temporary hair loss is another result.

90 Rem

Distance: 250 miles

Causes a temporary decrease in white blood cells, although there are no immediate harmful effects. Two to three years will need to pass before radioactivity levels in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

Radius of destructive circle: 1.7 miles

12 pounds per square inch

At the center lies a crater 200 feet deep and 1000 feet in diameter. The rim of this crater is 1,000 feet wide and is composed of highly radioactive soil and debris. Nothing recognizable remains within about 3,200 feet (0.6 miles) from the center, except, perhaps, the remains of some buildings' foundations. At 1.7 miles, only some of the strongest buildings – those made of reinforced, poured concrete – are still standing. Ninety-eight percent of the population in this area is dead.

Radius: 2.7 miles

5 psi

Virtually everything is destroyed between the 12 and 5-psi rings. The walls of typical multi-story buildings, including apartment buildings, have been completely blown out.

The bare, structural skeletons of more and more buildings rise above the debris as you approach the 5-psi ring. Single-family residences within this area have been completely blown away – only their foundations remain. Fifty percent of the population between the 12 and 5-psi rings are dead. Forty percent are injured.

Radius: 4.7 miles  
2 psi

Any single-family residences that have not been completely destroyed are heavily damaged. The windows of office buildings have been blown away, as have some of their walls. The contents of these buildings' upper floors, including the people who were working there, are scattered on the street. A substantial amount of debris clutters the entire area. Five percent of the population between the 5 and 2-psi rings are dead. Forty-five percent are injured.

Radius: 7.4 miles  
1 psi

Residences are moderately damaged. Commercial buildings have sustained minimal damage. Twenty-five percent of the population between the 2 and 1-psi rings are injured, mainly by flying glass and debris. Many others have been injured from thermal radiation – the heat generated by the blast. The remaining seventy-five percent are un-hurt.”

The weapon used on the airport was more like 100kT. It more or less missed its intended target striking east ~2 miles. Our homes survived with minor to moderate damage, but we didn't know that. The well house came through intact as did the shelter. As you can see from the following it does make a difference in the size of the weapon. A 100kT bomb has a much smaller damage radius: 15 psi: 0.71 miles; 5 psi: 1.3 miles; 2 psi: 2.28 miles; 1 psi: 3.37 miles; 0.25 psi: 8.63 miles; and, 0.1 psi: 17.68 miles.

o

I was sitting at my computer working on something, probably another story. I had the TV on, but I can't tell what was playing because I wasn't really watching TV. I heard the tone and looked. They were flashing the TV version of the EAS message. I turned it up and listened. It was a White House spokesman saying we were under attack with missiles coming from China.

I grabbed the phone and called Derek. I wasn't sure what to say so I told him, "Red Alert, we have incoming missiles from China."

Comment: On 6-20-06, the US placed its existing ABM's on active status. They also had 2 DDG's close enough to North Korea to possibly shoot the missile down in launch phase. I'm thinking about offering my crystal ball for sale on E-Bay. I suspect the DDGs

have the Standard 3 missiles. My wife told me I could have a M1A for Christmas. I think I'm having a heart attack!

## Fort Navajo – Chapter 10

Of course I didn't mention 10 magazines or the 5,000 rounds of ammo, but I can spread that out over time. Maybe she'll buy me another PT1911 for my 66<sup>th</sup> birthday.

I repeated the call to Damon and he must have really been sleeping. "Red Alert, we have incoming missiles from China."

"Huh?"

"This is not a drill; get your butts in the shelter."

Gunny was next on my list and I clicked save and shut my computer down while the phone rang. "This is not a drill. Red Alert, we have incoming missiles from China."

Next I woke Sharon up and told her to wake up Amy while I took care of a few things. Specifically, I need to get my computer to the shelter followed by the dogs and cats. I yanked the cables and grabbed the computer, hauling it to the shelter entrance. Derek was opening it up and I said, "Get my monitor, it's too heavy for me to carry."

I grabbed the speakers in one hand and the mouse and keyboard in the other. I dumped them at the shelter entrance and went after the dogs. First I took Missy and went back and got Scrappy. Sharon was holding Sassy and Pyewacket was in the kitchen begging for food. Once we had the animals in the shelter, Amy and her kids climbed down. Mary, Elizabeth and Joshua were already there. Damon came with Jeffrey and Lorrie and they went down. I told Damon to lower the antenna mast and secure the wind turbines.

I went back to the house and grabbed the first box Sharon was filling from the refrigerator. She started on a second and I got it too. When I got back, she was getting the frozen goods from the refrigerator's freezer. I strapped on my guns, grabbed the Winchester and then the box.

"Forget it dear, I don't know if we have time for everything."

"I need my sewing machines, they're computerized."

"Grab the portable and I'll get the boys."

"Hey, you two, come back up, I need your help. Get Sharon's sewing machines, they're computerized."

"What about her computer?"

"Get that too, but hurry."

Just as they finished, Gunny and Norma pulled in.

"In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Amen. I now pronounce you husband and wife, hurry up; they gave the notice 10 minutes ago."

We followed USS instructions to the letter and filled part of the tunnel with bags of beans, rice and potatoes. I turned on a small flashlight and the dogs went back into the tunnel. Then I did a nose count and we had everyone. Call me crazy but I had cable TV in the shelter. I wanted to watch the end of the world on TV, if I could.

The first indication we had anything was happening was when national news feeds began popping off the air. We did know that both Air Force One and Air Force Two had taken off, in different directions. I don't know and they didn't say, but I'd guess that the President went to the nearest shelter. I mean really, would you want Dick Cheney running the country?

After a while the only news was coming from one local station, KNAZ, Flagstaff. Finally even they went off the air. We sat, we talked, and we worried, me about the Winslow airport. I don't know how long it was before we felt the ground shake, maybe an hour, maybe two. It felt like an earthquake, but I knew better.

We were about 8 miles west of the crater the bomb created. If it had been 2 miles to the west of the airport, we'd be alive, but the homes would be gone. The real question would be how long could we hold out in the shelter. We probably had 0.3 psi, give or take. I don't know and I don't really care. I can tell you that we were nearly out of food before it was safe to come out. We couldn't afford even one of those fancy anti-radiation suits. The best we had was some N-100 air masks.

The CD V-717 worked as advertised and went off scale. After 7 hours, the radiation level was ~ 300R and at 49 hours 30R. At 343 hours it was down to 3R and at 100 days 300mR. We could egress briefly, long enough to bring in more food and empty the waste, but that was the extent of our outside time. We had been running on batteries, periodically recharged by the generator. The longer we stayed, the smaller the shelter became. When the radiation level finally hit 100mR, we bailed out of the shelter. That was around day 125, seven raised to the 4.1 power.

"Slider, you stink."

"Line out of a movie?"

"*Top Gun.*"

"That goes for everyone, Tom."

It took me a while to get here, but I warned you it would. We were ~8 miles from ground zero of a 100kT nuclear weapon. Holbrook had gotten hit with a larger 300kT weapon. Flagstaff had gotten hit with a similar sized weapon, 300kT. The furnaces in our homes

had been set on 55° as had been the heater in the well house. The weather was dry and very, very cold. Between the 3 homes, we had 6 bathrooms and nearly ran out of hot water, but everyone managed a shower.

At age 5+ Udell had been diagnosed as bi-polar, the same as Damon. I can tell you for a fact that it was a very good thing that I had loaded up on Xanax. I had started out with approximately 3,600 of the 0.5mg pills. I did not have a whole lot left even though I'd been cutting them in half and only giving people 0.75mg a day (0.25mg TID). You might say I was sort getting screwed without getting kissed.

I most definitely had not planned on our doing any scavenging like The Three Amigos had in most of my stories. But I hadn't planned on being put in a situation where I had to share my meds either. I had taken them only to sleep, ~ 240 pills. Another 2,400 had been used to keep everyone from killing each other as tempers wore thin. I only had a 1½-year supply left, and I was rather upset about that. I had about the same amount left of my other meds, so I wasn't too sure I'd see 67.

This was Arizona, not California, and there wasn't a pharmacy on every third street corner. On the other hand, we had 18 months to find me more. Damon and Udell Jr. didn't have nearly the back stock I had. We had a lot of food left and plenty of toilet paper. I wasn't allowed to smoke in the shelter, but went to the tunnel, cutting my consumption of smokes quite a bit. I needed a drink, man, did I need a drink; screw it, I had one.

o

The only vehicle we could get to start was my ATV.

"Do me a favor."

"Sure, what?"

"Lock up that booze where I can't get to it. We may need it for medicinal purposes later and if you don't secure it, I'll drink it all up."

"I'll take it," Derek said.

"We need a vehicle."

"I should be able to Mary's pickup to run."

"How, Derek?"

"There a cardboard box in the shelter with a full set of spare ignition parts, alternator, starter and computer. You can write off the Daewoo, there aren't any parts anywhere for it."

"We need to get the wind turbines running."

"If they aren't burned out, we will. One thing at a time."

"Where are the nearest National Guard Armories?"

"Show Low, Flagstaff and Bellemont."

"Bellemont is Navajo Depot. That's probably a better bet than Show Low or Flagstaff. The installation has three missions: (1) Operate a National Guard training site (2) Provide command and control of the Arizona Army National Guard force structure in Northern Arizona (3) Provide depot-level storage services to various DoD customers."

"About the same thing to the Army as MCLB, Barstow is to the Marines?"

"Munitions wise, anyway."

"Let's get things in order here and then we can go looking."

o

Even with the antenna mast fully raised, we didn't hear many people on the air. I hadn't modified the TS-2000 and didn't know how. If we could, we could hear military frequencies that weren't encrypted. While they tinkered with the Dodge pickup, I started a list. We needed a SINCGARS radio, antenna and a power supply. We didn't really need ammunition, I had plenty of that. The other thing on my list was drugs for everyone on a prescription of any kind. Darn it was cold. The date was January 28, 2009.

I dug around and found the coat I'd bought in 1997 and hadn't worn in years. It was a parka like coat I bought at Burlington Coat Factory when I was chasing after bimbo #2. I guess if you don't wear them, they don't wear out. Although each of the homes had fireplaces, we didn't have any firewood because a pile of firewood by another name was a snake home. So prepared and yet, unprepared. I should have read more of my own stories. All those typos clearly indicated I wrote them but hadn't read them.

"Pickup runs."

"We'll try to find some old vehicles that weren't wiped out by EMP. It can't be too widespread, if they did ground bursts."

"Oh really, it got ours?"

"We were close to a ground zero. However, are you sure it isn't just dead batteries? The EMP from a ground burst is negligible."

"Why didn't you suggest that before I changed out all the parts in the Dodge?"



"I didn't occur to me. Don't assume dead batteries, only try to charge one. Whoever attacked us could have detonated a high power weapon at a very high altitude. If they did that, everything electronic is dead."

"Try your TV."

"That won't help; we have no signal on the cable box."

I'll be the first one to admit I'd slid a bit in the mental department. Most of it was still there, but I had access problems. Getting old seems to start with your gums receding. Then my teeth went followed by my eyes when I got cataracts. My teeth didn't fall out, they broke. I had a lot of caps in my mouth. Somewhere along the line, I pretty much lost the hearing in my right ear. You know the rest; I won't repeat it, again. I'd be 66 on 3-23-09, if I didn't freeze to death first. Did I say it was cold out?

o

We, they, lugged everything out of the shelter that had hurriedly been placed there before the warheads started falling. The food in the freezer was fine and Sharon had gotten anything that would spoil out of the refrigerator. The kids didn't have much left in the way of leftovers to spoil. Triple redundancy had paid off; the food in the freezers was still frozen solid. The vehicles were deader than a doornail. We hadn't burned a lot of propane because the generator only kicked in when the batteries were discharged. On the other hand, some of the electronics seemed to be ok. The wind turbines had been shut down and hadn't burned out. If you can explain that, please let me know.

"Do you have a list of the things we need?"

"SINCGARS, antenna and power supply plus drugs for everyone on prescriptions. That's all I could think of. I take any Kool's you find."

"I suppose we ought to go see what we can find," Gunny suggested.

"I'll stay here and guard the home place. There are a whole lot of igloos at Navajo Depot, get anything we can use including vehicles."

"What kind of vehicles?"

"Well, I always wanted a Hummer with a Ma Deuce on the top. Anything you can find that runs will be ok with me."

They left the next morning and were gone most of the day. Around sunset, I began to get worried, but then the Army arrived. They had a Hummer with a Ma Deuce towing a trailer of something and they had a modified LAV-III (M1126 Stryker equipped with a M2 machinegun) and a second Hummer, with a M240, towing a trailer of fuel.

"What in the fuel trailer?"

"JP-8."

"How about the other trailer?"

"A little of this, a little of that and mostly things I thought you would want," Derek grinned.

They had stacked the inside of the Stryker full of .50 caliber belted ammo. The trailer had an assortment of things I would like, M67 grenades, LAW rockets, C-4 with detonators, Javelin missiles (4) and a half dozen of the M-4/M-203 carbines with ammo, grenades and magazines. They had stopped at one pharmacy and cleaned them out of everything I had listed. I sure wish pharmacies stocked more.

Gunny had a new rifle, an M107 and several cases of Mark 211 ammo. He gave me back my cannon and also gave me some of the ammo. Maybe if I mount the Tac-50 on a winch, I can shoot down helicopters. Mark 211 is also called Raufoss ammunition.

"What's for supper?"

"Beans."

"Tomorrow night?"

"Beans."

"White bean or pinto beans?"

"White beans."

"When do you make the goulash?"

"Wednesday."

The boys should feel right at home. That sounded a whole lot like my late wife's (Joyce) menu. Sharon didn't use the same recipe for bread that Joyce and her mother used. She used the recipe out of Better Homes and Garden cookbook. On her last trip to Costco, she bought 300 pounds each of pinto beans, rice, flour and 3 jars of yeast. We didn't have any buttermilk so she substituted powdered milk.

o

"Did you get me any smokes?"

"Next trip, Tom. We're going after more prescription drugs and cigarettes."

"You smoking now?"

"Might as well, if I don't get cancer from the fallout, someone will shoot me."

"God didn't let us live through this just to kill us off."

"How many do you figure?"

"I have no idea, 1, 2, 3 billion dead or dying."

"Why do you think that?"

"I don't believe China had enough warheads to nuke Winslow. Therefore the Russians must have been involved."

"How long will we have this Nuclear Winter?"

"The most correct answer is when it's over, but I don't really know. TTAPS suggest 6 months or longer, but it could go for several years. After, we'll get a nuclear summer and high levels of ultra violet radiation. I think the best approach is to live life according to the AA model, one day at a time. Derek has proven we can grow gardens so that will probably be our primary source of food from now on. You need to think about things we can't produce, drugs, toilet paper, propane, and gasoline. We can stabilize the gas and it will last."

"Can you make me a list?"

"Yes. I can also suggest where you should look for certain things. You are most likely to find PRI-D and PRI-G at marinas, for example. You should locate and haul all of the fuel you can. Were there any LAV-25s at Navajo Depot?"

"I really don't know."

"Get some, they have the Bushmaster cannon. Get the 25mm ammo for them too. Most armories don't have much ammo so you really need to get what you can at the depot. See if you can find a minimum of two AN/PVS-27 Magnum Universal Night Sights. I have the rail on the Tac-50 and will do something for the Super Match."

Derek told me that the little grenade holders on the sides of the magazine pouches were very dangerous to use. He suggested hanging the grenades on my web gear or adding a pouch just for them. I did as he suggested and used one magazine pouch for grenades instead of magazines. I also got a LAW out of the carton and had Gunny explain to me how to use it. I've seen the movies, but there is nothing like hands on experience

from a veteran who had actually used them. I kept the carton in the front hall closet and told Sharon hands off.

They had made the trip on the 2nd day out of the shelter. On the 4th day, they made a second trip with the Stryker. When they returned after dark, they had 2 more Hummers, ammo, cigarettes and prescription drugs. They took another day off and on the 6th day made their final trip for a while, this time coming back with a tanker vehicle full of JP-8, fuel stabilizers and more drugs, smokes, ammo and 6 MUNS. *Si vis pacem, para bellum.* - If you want peace, prepare for war.

Sharon had thawed a pair of baking hens for Sunday dinner. Al and Norma were staying with Damon and Lorrie, but they need a place of their own. So did Amy, she wasn't taking this home over. On Monday they went to Show Low and returned with 2 new 16' wide singlewides. They spent most of the week getting them installed. All we need now was an inverter to bring us up to 40kw. Then I remember the 3.6kw inverter in the well house and we were set. They went into Winslow and managed to salvage enough furniture to outfit the singlewides. We threw camouflage netting over the Stryker and got ready to sit out the winter.

o

We didn't have a lot of the white beans and it wasn't long before Sharon had to shift to pinto beans. I heard about that. But under the circumstances, she wasn't complaining very loud. She wasn't very happy about anything. She hated the survival food, she hated the war and she wasn't looking forward to living on beans.

"Why the M4/M203s, Gunny?"

"The Depot had those; the National Guard is always at the end of the line. They were new, that's something. Derek scored some of the CLS Bags. Gary, I don't know quite how to tell you this, but I think we're looking at 250 Million dead in the US."

"Do you speak Navajo?"

"Yes, why?"

"Spanish?"

"Some."

"We'll, if we lost that many people, English might become a foreign language."

Right at that moment, my brain turned off.

"Are you ok?"

"Get me a coke; my blood sugar is must be low."

"Did you have breakfast?"

"Uh..."

"I'll get the coke."

"Thank you."

"We aren't really married, you know. I think we'll go to the Res and have a Navajo wedding."

"Have fun."

"You don't want to go?"

"I've love to, but it's too damned cold out."

"Do you need anything?"

"Cigarettes, but I'm short on money. I don't want to spend our cash in case we need to buy something."

"Anything else?"

"Yeah, about 30 cords of firewood."

They were back 2 days later. Al said he'd arranged for the firewood and some of his cousins would be bringing it down. Cousins? I wrote that story already. They brought 2 of the 2½-ton trucks loaded to nearly overflowing with firewood. Three times, they did that and we refilled the gas tank each time. Gunny gave his cousins 3 of the M4/M203 with ammo, grenades and magazines. I was guessing each truck held about 4 cords of wood and asked Al when we were going to get the other 6 cords.

"Tom, that's all the spare wood they had. They're willing to brave the cold and cut more, but it will cost us."

"How much?"

"They want a Bradley IFV or a LAV-25."

"Guns and ammo too, I suppose?"

"You got it."

"Any Bradley's or LAV-25s at Navajo Depot?"

"I didn't see any, that why we brought back more Hummers. There are lots of ammo and explosives, even stages for the Minuteman II missiles."

"Do you feel up to a trip to California?"

"Barstow?"

"And/or Ft. Irwin."

"They were most probably nuked."

"It couldn't hurt to look."

"Are you going along?"

"I think maybe I will, I've been to Ft. Irwin but never Barstow or Yermo Annex. Derek has done a training session at the NTC."

"What are we looking for?"

"LAV-25s, IFVs, munitions, small arms and anything else we see that we can use."

"Fuel?"

"If we can find a way to transport it, yes."

"We'd better take Mary," Derek suggested. "She can drive anything and if push comes to shove, so can Damon."

Rather than bore you with the fine points, we got a HETS and loaded on 2 CFVs from Ft. Irwin. We got a tanker load of JP-8, our second, and a few odd and ends at Barstow. Some of the odds and ends were still new in the box. Mary drove the HETS, Damon cussed a blue streak and drove the tanker and Derek drove the 1 LAV-25 we found. Gunny and I drove the 2 Hummers back to Navajo Depot and loaded up on munitions, which we towed back to the ranch in trailers. An M-3 CFV is 10' shorter than a M1A1 Abrams. A HETS was designed to carry one Abrams, but Mary managed to jockey 2 of the CFVs onto the trailer. She claimed she'd done it before. The M1000 trailer is 51' 10" long. A M3 CFV is 21' 6" and weighs  $\frac{1}{3}$  the weight of an M1A2 Abrams.

o

It turned out to be a nice place to put a prison, all of the inmates received a death sentence from the enemy. Everyone was out of a job. I suggested that we had 24 acres

here and we could use all the people we could get just to survive. Naturally the question arose about how we were going to plow the ground.

"You got me guys; I doubt my ATV will pull a plow, if we had one, which we don't."

"Do you know how to farm?"